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Monthly GK Digest

April 2021

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Monthly Digest
April-2021

Dear readers,
This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in a month of **'April 2021'**. This file is important for**, Bank, SSC**, **and Railway's** exams.

Banking & Financial Awareness

1. **Facebook** has partnered with **Google** to connect the United States of America with Southeast Asian countries through undersea cables.
   Note: At the initial stage, 2 undersea cables: Echo and Bifrost, will be connecting the US with Indonesia through a diverse sea route in the Trans-pacific region. Note- Facebook deploys 3000 Kms of fibre in Indonesia to develop public Wi-Fi hot spots. "Echo" – Constructed by Facebook in partnership with Google & XL Axiata, an Indonesian telecom company. It is expected to get completed by 2023.
2. **NITI Aayog** has released a report titled 'Investment Opportunities in India's Healthcare Sector' that highlighted the range of investment opportunities in different segments of India's Healthcare sector.
   Note: The report highlights the range of investment opportunities in different segments of India's Healthcare sector. Investments in the Healthcare sector are expected to reach USD 372 Billion in 2022. The FDI inflows in the sector increased from USD 94 million in 2011 to USD 1, 275 million in 2016 (a jump of over 13.5 times).
3. **RBL Bank** has collaborated with UK based business banking fintech Tide Platform Limited (Tide) to provide bank account infrastructure to Tide's India platform, which is focused to serve mainly small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
   Note: Tide's first market outside the UK, is India due to its vast SME population of around 63 million, and the people's entrepreneurial spirit. Gurjodhpal Singh the former vice president of PayU (Payment Service Provider) will lead Tide's business in India.
4. **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** partnered with **nStore Technologies Private Limited** (nStore)to digitise offline retailers and small businesses in India.
   Note: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank(Ujjivan SFB) partnered with nStore Technologies Private Limited (nStore)to digitise offline retailers and small businesses in India. Under this collaboration, Ujjivan SFB will offer the mobile application 'nLincs', to its current account holders who own local businesses and enable them to sell their products online.
5. **State bank of India** has signed a loan agreement of $1 billion with the **Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)** to provide loans for the whole range of business operations of the Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.
   Note: In October 2020, SBI similar $1 billion loan agreement with JBIC. After the current loan agreement, the total loan facility is now about $2 billion. The financing will assist the Government's 'Make in India' initiative. SBI will provide the loan with refinancing for the funding support to the manufacturers, suppliers and dealers of Japanese automobiles in India.
6. According to the report titled "**Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021**" released by the UN-ESCAP, the Indian Economy will grow by **7 per cent** in financial year 2021-22.
   Note: The report has forecasted the Indian economy to grow at 7% in FY21 against a contraction of 7.7%(-7.7%) in FY20. It reported a "K-shaped recovery" in the economics of the Asia Pacific region, including India.
7. **ICICI Bank and Axis Bank** have tied up to launch a New Umbrella Entity (NUE) for retail payments along with global e-commerce major Amazon and cards major Visa as their partners.
   Note: ICICI Bank and Axis Bank will be co-leading with each having a 20% stake (40%) and the other partners including Amazon, Billdesk, Pine Labs and Visa will be holding a stake of 15% each (60%) RBI allowed other organisations to set up umbrella entities for payments systems to create an alternate mechanism(rivalry) to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for speeding up the cashless payment. RBI has fixed March 31, 2021, as the deadline for making application to form NUEs.
8. According to the **South Asia Economic Focus Spring** update report published by the World Bank, **10.1%** will be the growth rate of Indian economy in FY 2021-22.
   Note: Real India GDP growth will be in the range from 7.5% to 12.5%. As per World Bank, government consumption is expected to rise by about 16.7% during the reported fiscal. Report forecast growth for the South Asia region at 7.2% in 2021 and 4.4% in 2022.

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9. **Rs 14,500 crore** has been announced by the government to infuse in the in 4 state-owned banks in 2020-21, by issuing non-interest-bearing bonds to these banks.
   Note: Four Banks are Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of India and UCO Bank Recapitalisation bonds will be issued with six different maturities, and special securities will be at par for the amount as per eligible bank application. This infusion will complete govt's total capital infusion of Rs 20,000 crore in PSBs for 2020-21.
10. RBI has extended the timeline for processing recurring online transactions till **September 30, 2021.**
    Note: Prior to this, in December 2020, RBI had directed all banks including RRBs, NBFCs, and payment gateways that processing of recurring transactions (domestic or cross-border) using cards or Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) or Unified Payments Interface will not be continued beyond March 31, 2021 if they do not comply with Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA).
11. **Nirmala Sitharaman** represented India in the **6th annual meeting of the Board of Governors of New Development Bank (NDB)**.
    Note: Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs and India's Governor in New Development Bank (NDB), Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attended the 6th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of New Development Bank through video-conference in New Delhi today. The meeting was also attended by Governors/Alternate Governors of Brazil, China, Russia and South Africa.
12. The **National Investment & Infrastructure Fund Ltd** (NIIFL) invested Rs 2100 crore in **Manipal Hospitals** that is its first investment in the Indian healthcare sector.
    Note: NIIFL will get a minority stake in Manipal Hospitals as Chairman of Manipal Education and Medical Group Ranjan Pai is selling a small percentage of his stake in the company. In January 2021 Manipal Health Enterprises Private Limited acquired the Columbia Asia Hospital. This investment will support Manipal Hospitals' journey of growth to become one of India's largest hospital chains. NIIFL manages over $4.5 billion of equity capital commitments across three funds (master fund, fund of funds and Strategic Opportunities Fund).
13. **Yes Bank** has bought the Reliance Centre of Reliance Infrastructure Limited (RInfra) at Santacruz, Mumbai, Maharashtra for Rs.1200 crores.
    Note: This sale of the office building of 21432.28 square meter plot in Santacruz is utilized to repay the debt of YES Bank. Under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act 2002, The YES bank has issued the demand notice to Reliance Infrastructure Ltd on 6th May 2020, for non-payment of loans amounting to Rs. 2,892 crore.
14. Digital Payment company **PhonePe** has become the first company to cross one billion transactions on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) infrastructure.
    Note: The company achieved the feat in March 2021, when the total transactions clocked around 1.3 billion on its platform, across the payment instruments offering of wallet, cards as well as UPI. PhonePe, which first achieved market leadership on UPI in December, last year, has seen its transaction count grow steadily, on the back of rising merchant payments.
15. **ICIC Bank** has partnered with PhonePe for the issuance of FASTags using UPI on the PhonePe app.
    Note: This integration allows over 280 million registered users to order and track FASTag conveniently on the app. PhonePeusers, who may be customers of any bank, will have a fully digitised experience as they don't have to visit physical stores or toll locations to buy a FASTag. ICICI Bank is the first bank to partner with PhonePe for the issuance of FASTag.
16. According to latest World Economic Outlook report released by IMF **12.5%** is India's growth projection for India.
    Note: International Monetary Fund (IMF) has upgraded its growth projection for India to 12.5% for Financial Year 2021-22 in its latest World Economic Outlook report. IMF projected global economy to expand 6% this year, up from the 5.5% pace estimated in January.
17. **Rs 75 lakh** is the new loan limit under Priority Sector Lending (PSL) against the Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (NWRs)/electronic-NWRs(e-NWRs) as prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India.
    Note: With a view to ensure greater flow of credit to the farmers against pledge/hypothecation of agricultural produce, and to encourage use of NWR/eNWR issued by regulated warehouses as a preferred instrument for availing such finance by the farmers, it has been decided to enhance the PSL limit for loans against NWRs/eNWRs from ₹50 lakh to ₹75 lakh per borrower. The PSL limit backed by the warehouse receipts other than NWR/eNWR will continue to be ₹50 lakh per borrower.
18. The Reserve Bank of India has enhanced the limit of maximum balance at end of the day maintained in Payments Bank from Rs 1 lakh to **Rs 2.0 lakh.**
    Note: Earlier, the limit was ₹1 lakh. Payments bank aims to further financial inclusion, especially through savings accounts and payments services. The central bank introduced payments banks in the country to enhance financial inclusion.

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19. **Rs. 47,010 crore** is the increased limit of the Way and Means Advances (WMA) for the State Governments/UTs as on April 2021.
Note: The central bank provides this support to governments under its ways and means advances (WMA) mechanism. The new limit has been fixed at Rs 47,010 crore, compared with the previous Rs 32,225 crore. There are two types of WMA – normal and special. While normal WMA is clean advances, special WMA is secured advances provided against the pledge of government securities.
20. On the recommendation of **Sudhir Shrivastava committee**, the RBI has increased the he limits for Way and Means Advances (WMA) for the State Governments/UTs from Rs. 32,225 crores (fixed in February 2016) to Rs. 47,010 crores
Note: This represents an increase of about 46%. There are two types of WMA – normal and special. While normal WMA is clean advances, special WMA is secured advances provided against the pledge of government securities. Earlier in the month, RBI fixed the WMA limit for the central government at Rs 1,20,000 crore for the first half of the financial year 2021-22.
21. **RBI** has proposed to construct and publish a Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) based on multiple parameters.
Note: The RBI proposes to construct and publish a Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) based on multiple parameters. This will be published in July every year for the financial year ending previous March. Over the past few years, the banking regulator has announced several measures to step up financial inclusion and reach the unbanked. Last year, the RBI had released the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion for India 2019-2024.
22. **Indian Bank** is the technical and banking partner for development of "मधुक्रान्तिपोर्टल" launched by the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar to enable traceability source of honey and other beehive products.
Note: This portal is being developed for online registration to achieve traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform. The technical and banking partner for development of this digital platform is Indian Bank. An MoU between NBB and Indian Bank was signed for this project.
23. Maruti Suzuki has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Karnataka Bank** to offer auto finance deals to customers.
Note: Under the purview of this tie-up, people buying a Maruti Suzuki car will be able to avail this car loan offer across 858 branches of Karnataka Bank all over India. This partnership is aimed to make the vehicle buying journey easy and affordable for our customers. Rapid technological development and new digital consumer behaviours are determining auto sales across India.
24. **Axis Bank** has become co-promoters of Max Life Insurance Company Limited, after completion of the acquisition of 12.99% stake collectively by the bank in the company.
Note: The lender said that Axis Bank and its two subsidiaries—Axis Capital Limited and Axis Securities Limited – will collectively own 12.99% stake in Max Life after the consummation of the deal. With the conclusion of this transaction, Max Life'sBoard will be strengthened further, with co-option of three nominee directors of Axis Entities on its Board.
25. **HDFC Bank** gives grants to 21 startups working in the social sector under its SmartUp Grants 2021**.**
Note: 21 startups working in the social sector were selected through a rigorous screening process from 300 applicants. The bank instituted SmartUp grants in 2017 and It has supported 87-number of startups from various cities across India so far. HDFC Bank has partnered with IIT Delhi, IIM Kashipur, AIC-BIMTECH, IIT BHU, GUSEC, C-CAMP, Banasthali University etc. to shortlist the winner.
26. **Asian Development Bank** has approved a USD 484-mn to improve transport connectivity and road maintenance in the Chennai -Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC) in Tamil Nadu.
Note: The CKIC is part of India's East Coast Economic Corridor. It stretches from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu and connects India to the production networks of Southeast and East Asia. The project will upgrade about 590 km of state highways in the CKIC influence areas.
27. **Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation** has issued country's first green bonds.
Note: Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation, a civic body in Uttar Pradesh, has raised Rs 150 crore through the issuance of green bonds and the proceeds will be utilised for the tertiary water treatment plant to benefit industries in Ghaziabad. The corporation also received Rs 19.5 crore incentive from the Union government for raising funds through municipal bonds.
28. FlexiLoans.com, a digital lending platform has partnered with **PayPal** to offer collateral free loan to MSME's and Freelancers.
Note: FlexiLoans.com, a digital lending platform focused on Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) partnered with PayPal, a leading digital payments company to offer collateral-free business loans to MSMEs, freelancers, women entrepreneurs and sole proprietors. This partnership is in line with PayPal's commitment to provide innovative credit solution capabilities to Indian merchants who sell cross-border using PayPal.

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29. Bharti Axa Life insurance has partnered with **Fincare Small Finance Bank** for a bancassurance partnership under which the bank will sell insurance policies to its customers.
Note: Under the partnership, Bharti AXA Life Insurance will offer its comprehensive suite of life insurance products, including protection, savings and investment plans, to the customers of Fincare Small Finance Bank across its 747 branches and digital network presence across the country. This alliance will make life insurance solutions reachable to over 26.5 lakhs customers of Fincare Small Finance Bank and provide financial security to them.
30. **Airtel Payments Bank** launched its new 'Rewards123' savings account, which provides customers with perks and rewards.
Note: The Rewards123 Savings Account is built specifically that allows you to get access to a variety of perks when you save and transact digitally. The company claims that its newly introduced saving account is designed to offer consistent value, with assured rewards on different types of digital transactions throughout the year.
31. In association with **ICICI Bank** the NITI Aayog has developed first of its kind Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Handbook that was launched by the Supreme Court Justice DY Chandrachud.
Note: Supreme Court Justice DY Chandrachud released the first of its kind Online Dispute Resolution(ODR) Handbook developed by Agami and Omidyar Network India. The handbook was developed in association with (National Institution for Transforming India) NITI Aayog with the support of ICICI Bank, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, Trilegal, Dalberg, Dvara and NIPFP. ODR Handbook features the insights and learnings to equip a person to successfully adopt ODR.
32. According to International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, India's debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio at the end of 2020 is **90 percent.**
Note: The International Monetary Fund(IMF) reported an increase in India's debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio from 74 percent (at the end of 2019) to 90 percent (at the end of 2020) during the COVID-19 period. Based on the IMF's baseline forecast, it expects a further drop in India's 'Debt to GDP ratio' to 80 percent due to the recent Indian economy recovery. IMF suggested India to support people and firms, and, in particular, the most vulnerable.
33. SwitchON Foundation has partnered with **Punjab National Bank** to offer finance to the marginal farmers for buying solar pumps.
Note: PNB will be financing solar pumps through the SwitchON Foundation's – First Loss Default Guarantee Fund. The basic aim of this fund is to help unbanked small marginal farmers without any collateral and to promote clean energy.
34. The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) has secured a Rs 600 crore loan from **Deutsche Bank** for onward lending to cooperatives in the country.
Note: An agreement in this regard inked between NCDC and Deutsche Bank, Germany's largest bank. The farmer producer organisations being set up in the country would be able to access easier credit and market through the NCDC agreements with ICC and Deutsche Bank, which will help small and marginal farmers.
35. The National Housing Bank recently allocated **Rs 10,000** under its "Special Refinance Facility", 2021 to provide short term refinance support to the housing finance companies and other eligible Primary Lending Institutions.
Note: The objective of the SRF 2021, is to provide short term refinance support to HFCs and other eligible PLIs on flexible terms and conditions. The total amount allocated under this scheme shall be Rs.10,000 crore. The facility will aid in meeting the short-term liquidity requirement in the Public Lending Institutions.
36. The Government of India has announced mandatory hallmarking of gold artefacts and jewellery from **1st June 2021.**
Note: In November 2019, the govt had announced that hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts would be made mandatory across the country from 15 January 2021. But the deadline was extended for four months after the jewellers sought more time in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.
37. As per the **IRDAI** (Regulatory Sandbox) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India has extended the validity of Regulatory Sandbox for **2 years.**
Note: As most of the approved experiments may not be completed (due to COVID-19) within the scheduled time of July 25, 2021. This extension of the time period will enable the applicants to complete their existing sandbox experiments and new sandbox proposals also will be allowed.
38. The **Competition Commission of India** (CCI) approved the acquisition of **89.6 per cent** of equity shareholding of Gangavaram Port Limited (GPL) by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones (APSEZ) Limited.
Note: The acquisition was approved under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002. The APSEZ Ltd has acquired the controlling stakes of GPL from DVS Raju and Family

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for Rs.3604 crore. APSEZ acquired 58.1 per cent stakes of GPL from DVS Raju & Family and 31.5 per cent stake of Warburg Pincus.

39. e-commerce company **Flipkart** announced to acquire 100% stake in Cleartrip, one of the oldest travel booking portals in India.
Note: Cleartrip will continue to operate as a separate brand and will work closely with Flipkart to further develop technology solutions. While the terms of the acquisition were not disclosed, the deal is expected to be a mix of cash and equity, likely valuing the online travel agent at around $40 million in what is considered to be a distress sale.
40. Social media giant **Facebook** has signed a deal to buy renewable energy in India from a local firm's wind power project that is companies first such deal in the country.
Note: The 32 megawatt wind power project, located in Karnataka, is part of a larger portfolio of wind and solar projects that Facebook and Mumbai-based CleanMax are working together on for supplying renewable power into India's electrical grid. CleanMax will own and operate the projects, while Facebook will buy the power off the grid using environmental attribute certificates, or carbon credits.
41. **Oberoi Group** has signed an MoU with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) to reduce its overall carbon footprint by implementing clean energy efficiency initiatives across its properties.
Note: EESL will collaborate with Oberoi Group Hotels to evaluate opportunities for saving energy and lowering emissions. It is the Government of India's Energy Service Company (ESCO) and the world's largest ESCO. It is a joint venture of 4 public sector undertakings (PSUs) of NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, REC Limited & POWERGRID Corporation of India Limited & EESL works under the Ministry of Power.
42. **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** will invest USD 100 million in J.C. Flowers India Opportunities Fund to help Indian financial institutions in resolving distressed assets.
Note: The investment is part of IFC's Distressed Asset Recovery Program's (DARP) work in India. Initially, IFC will invest USD 40 million. It will help the domestic lenders (Lenders in India) to resolve their distressed assets and free up the capital for new lending. It will allow mid-sized firms to preserve jobs and avoid insolvency during the pandemic.
43. **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** has partnered with fintech company, NIRA to strengthen its digital footprint and onboard its customers for Personal Loans.
Note: This was USFB's first Digital Lending Partnership. Salaried customers can apply for a personal loan by using the NIRA app, which will fund the low-income salaried class. The aim of the it is to serve the unserved and underserved customers through personal loans.
44. **Axis Bank** has allowed its customers to make International Fund Transfers (send money abroad) in over 100 currencies across 150 countries through the 'Send Money Abroad'.
Note: The users can send up to USD 25,000 (~18.63 Lakh) per transaction for any different purposes such as education fee payment, family maintenance, and health-related expenses. Axis bank transfers funds to global banks through the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) mode. SWIFT is a cooperative that provides safe and secure financial transactions as it assigns a unique code of either 8 characters or 11 characters for each financial organization.
45. Tech giant **Microsoft** has bought AI speech tech firm Nuance for $19.7 billion.
Note: The move will help Microsoft's prowess in voice recognition and will give it a boost in the health care market. Nuance is known for its Dragon software which helps to transcribe speech using deep learning. In 2016, Microsoft had purchased LinkedIn for $26 billion.
46. **RBL Bank** has partnered with **Mastercard** to launch a mobile-based consumer-friendly payment solution 'Pay by Bank App', a first-of-its-kind payment functionality in India.
Note: RBL Bank account holders can now enjoy contactless transactions across the world through their mobile banking application both in-store and online. This functionality will be available at all Mastercard accepting merchants, worldwide that accept contactless and online payments.
47. Under chairmanship of **Sudarshan Sen** the Reserve Bank of India has set up a six-member committee to carry out a comprehensive review of the working of Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) in the financial sector ecosystem.
Note: The six-member committee will be headed by Sudarshan Sen, former executive director, Reserve Bank of India (RBI). As per the terms of reference of the committee, the panel will review the existing legal and regulatory framework applicable to ARCs and recommend measures to improve efficacy of ARCs.
48. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has appointed **Paytm** to facilitate digital payments.
Note: The new contract requires a smoother payment process, wider variety of payment options and adding

more players (banks, wallets, etc) in payment channels. LIC has seen a surge in digital payments after the pandemic. The corporation does Rs 60,000 crore of premium collections from the digital mode, which does not include the payment made through banks. It sees around 8 crore digital transactions — a number expected to go up sharply.

49. **Asian Development Bank** has partnered with Habitat for Humanity International to help Microfinance Institutions (MFI) in providing housing loans to low income families in rural and semi urban areas of Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Philippines.
Note: In order to improve the construction quality and climate resilience by upgrading semi-permanent structures and installing sanitation and water connections, loans will be given to around 20,000 households by partner MFIs in the first phase. In the first phase Commercial banks will provide $30 million financing for housing loans to MFIs.
50. Digital payments **PhonePe** and financial services company has become the first company to cross 1 billion transactions on Unified Payment Interface (UPI).
Note: The company has crossed over 1.3 billion transactions on its platform across payment offerings of wallet,cards and UPI in March 2021. PhonePe has seen a growth in UPI transactions to 975.53 million in February 2021 from 902.03 million in December 2020.
51. With **Gramcovers**, the Agriculture Insurance Company of India Limited (AICIL) has partnered to develop the insurance penetration in rural India.
Note: The main objective of this partnership is to identify and develop useful rural insurance products that could help farmers. It also aims to increase the insurance coverage in rural parts of India. Under this partnership they have planned to reach around 25 million farmers.
52. **SBI Capital Markets Ltd** has been appointed as transaction advisor by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) for the privatization of the J N Port Container Terminal (JNPCT).
Note: JNPT has planned to privatize the JNPCT through the public-private-partnership (PPP) route in December 2020, and it was evaluated by the standing finance committee (SFC) in the ministry of ports, shipping, and waterways (MoPSW). JNPT has appointed SBI Caps as the transaction advisor for the PPP project which is estimated to cost Rs 863.31 crores. It is one of the five container terminals at JNPT and it has handled 1.35 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) a year (544,027 TEUs in FY21 from 718,863 TEUs in FY20).
53. The Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Ltd has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with **Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd,** another housing finance company.
Note: The loans under the program will be in the funding ratio of 80:20 in which 80% of the loan is with HDFC's books and 20% with Indiabulls HFL's books). Indiabulls will service the loan account throughout the life cycle of the loan and it holds 20% of the credit risk by way of direct exposure.
54. **FirstRand Bank** has decided to withdraw its banking services from India just within a week of Citi banks exit.
Note: It is the second largest bank in South Africa. FirstRand had started its banking service in India in late 2009 but it started lending to individual customers and small and medium enterprises only in 2012. The bank has its only office in Mumbai and acts as a branch of FirstRand Bank South Africa.
55. In Partnership with **YES Bank and ICICI Bank** the Aceware FinTech Services launched Kerala's first neobank called Ace Money Neobank.
Note: Under Ace Money, the start-ups, merchants, and enterprise entities can open present accounts, in line with the corporate. Chqbook is India's first Neobank for small business owners like kiranas, merchants, chemists, and others running proprietorships.
56. **Indian Overseas Bank** has appointed Ernst & Young Global Limited, a multinational professional services network as its digital consultant.
Note: This partnership is a part of IOB's growth strategy to transform its banking services into Digital format. The aim of the partnership is to increase IOB's digital share in the market and to attract millennial customers. The Digital consultant will support IOB to focus on utilizing and adopting the new technologies and enhance its service quality and delivery to its customers.
57. **BCB Bank** has acquired 9 per cent equity stake in Techfino Capital Private Limited (TCPL), a non-banking financial company (NBFC).
Note: TCPL provides customized consumer loans in the education and healthcare sectors and is present in key metros and tier-II cities across India. The funds raised by TCPL will be used in the enhancement of its current Tech Stack, apart from on-lending to customers.
58. **Tech Mahindra** has acquired the entire stake in US-headquartered hybrid cloud and DevOps services provider Digital OnUS for $120 million, including retention bonus and earnout payments.
Note: IT major Tech Mahindra has acquired the entire stake in US-headquartered hybrid cloud and DevOps services provider DigitalOnUS for $120 million, including retention bonus and earnout payments. The acquisition will strengthen Tech Mahindra's cloud-native

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development, hybrid cloud infrastructure and site reliability engineering automation. The transaction is expected to close by May 15.

59. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has restricted **American Express Banking Corp & Diners Club International Ltd** from on-boarding new domestic customers onto their card networks from May 1, 2021, due to the non-compliance with the directions on Storage of Payment System Data.
Note: American Express and Diners Club are authorized to operate card networks in India under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (PSS Act). In April 2018, RBI has made certain regulation under PSS Act for the storage of payment system data to payment system providers such as. Directed to store all the data related to payment systems (full end-to-end transaction details/information collected/carried/processed as part of the message/payment instruction) in a system only in India (within October 2018).

60. As per the RBI **15 years** should be the maximum tenure for the post of MD & CEO or Whole Time Director in banks, including private sector banks, small finance banks (SFBs) and wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign banks.
Note: As per the regulator, the post of MD & CEO or WTD (whole time director) can't be held by same incumbent for more than 15 years. The post of the MD & CEO or WTD cannot be held by the same incumbent for more than 15 years. Thereafter, the individual will be eligible for re-appointment as MD & CEO or WTD in the same bank, if considered necessary and desirable by the board, after a minimum gap of three years, subject to meeting other conditions

61. In April 2021, the Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the license of **Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited.**
Note: On liquidation, every depositor is entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of Rs 5 lakhs from the DICGC subject to the provisions of the DICGC Act, 1961. According to the regulator, the bank with its present financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors in the full and public interest would be adversely affected if the bank is allowed to carry on its banking business any further.

62. e-commerce payment platform **Paytm** has launched a new video-based wealth community called Wealth Community.
Note: Paytm Wealth Community is an investing community based on video, and "will enable users to attend live sessions conducted by subject matter experts across an array of wealth topics like Stocks, F&O, IPO, ETFs, Mutual Funds, Gold, Fixed Income, and Personal Finance.

63. In association with **Mastercard** the BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL) has launched ConQR - on Card solution to offer an easy payment solution for cardholders.
Note: This solution uses a Mastercard patented technology which enables cardholders/SMEs to accept cashless payments using their cards. By doing so, QR on card makes payments more flexible and empowers cardholders (mainly small merchants) to spend and earn on the same card.

64. **Indian Bank** has entered into pact with Chennai-based angel investment group **'The Chennai Angles'** for financing start-ups under the bank's loan product Ind Spring Board.
Note: Under this project, Indian Bank will support start-ups by extending credit facilities up to ₹50 crore for working capital needs and also fund term-loan requirements for acquiring fixed assets for their units.

65. The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the license of Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited based in **Maharshtra.**
Note: On liquidation, every depositor is entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of Rs 5 lakhs from the DICGC subject to the provisions of the DICGC Act, 1961. According to the regulator, the bank with its present financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors in the full and public interest would be adversely affected if the bank is allowed to carry on its banking business any further.

66. Axis Direct – the flagship brand of Axis Securities, a fully-owned subsidiary of Axis Bank has launched evolutionary mobile app- 'Axis Direct RING' to facilitate investment in **Stock Market.**
Note: RING is built on the latest Technology Stack above a robust Order Management and Risk Management system. RING technology scans over 25,000 stock market instruments in real-time and identifies opportunities for you to invest.

67. The CII- Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) has set a target to achieve Net Zero Carbon Emission by **2050.**
Note: As part of this mission, more than 250 leading organisations from Indian building sector have committed to achieve Net Zero status for their new and existing buildings. CII demonstrated India's first platinum-rated green building – CII-Sohrabji Godrej Green Business Centre at Hyderabad in the year 2004, which triggered the green building movement in India.

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68. According to Asian Development Outlook, 2021 released by the Asian Development Bank **11 percent** will be the growth rate of Indian Economy in the current fiscal year (2021-22).
Note: For FY2022, India's GDP is expected to expand at 7%. Further, it said the gross domestic product (GDP) of South Asia is expected to rebound to 9.5% this year, following a contraction of 6% in 2020, before moderating to 6.6% next year (2022).

69. Rs 200 crore capital has been infused in the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) through issue of equity shares by the Government of India.
Note: After the capital infusion, the government's holding in IFCI was increased from 61.02 per cent to 63.8 per cent. In the budget of FY21, the government had committed for funding Rs 200 crore to IFCI. In March 2020 also, the government infused Rs 200 crore.

70. According to the Annual Report of Asian Development Bank (ADB) released in April 2021, **$1.5 billion** ADB had provided to India in supporting the response to tackle covid-19.
Note: The $1.5 billion financing to India is a part of the ADB's $16.1 billion pandemic response in 2020 through a $20 billion assistance package announced by ADB in April 2020 to help its 26 member countries in managing the pandemic. In 2020, ADB has committed to provide $31.6 billion to help Asia and the Pacific to tackle Covid-19 outbreak and to support a green, sustainable recovery from the pandemic and address long term development challenges.

71. ICICI Bank has launched a digital and contactless banking platform, especially for retail merchants named as 'Merchant Stack'.
Note: The service, christened 'merchant stack', is targeted at the over 2 crore retail merchants in the country to render banking services digitally. The banking services under Merchant Stack will include zero-balance current account, instant credit facilities, 'digital store management' facility, loyalty programme, and value-added services like alliances with e-commerce and digital marketing platforms.

72. HDFC Bank has emerged as the top arranger of corporate bond deals in 2020-21 (FY21).
Note: However, for the last quarter of FY21, i.e January-March 2021, Axis Bank was the top arranger of corporate bond deals while HDFC was second in the last quarter. Axis Bank managed 16 deals worth Rs. 106.6 billion while HDFC Bank had 19 deals worth around Rs 70.4 billion.

73. Axis Bank has approved the reclassification of New India Assurance Co Ltd (NIACL) from promoter category to public category investor.
Note: As of April 22, 2021, 0.67 per cent of the total issued and paid-up equity share capital of the Axis bank was held by NIACL. The approval of the stock exchanges, statutory/regulatory authorities and shareholders of the bank are also subjected to reclassification.

74. Indian Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to provide telecom services to the bank at a competitive rate.
Note: The MoU was signed in the presence of the executive director of Indian Bank and chief general manager of BSNL Chennai Telephones. Indian bank already uses the service of BSNL and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL) for the Wide Area Network (WAN) across India.

75. By **2040** the IT major Wipro has announced its plan to achieve Net-Zero Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.
Note: The targets fixed by the company are in accordance with the Paris Agreement's objective to cap temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and the globally accepted Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

Obituaries

1. Japanese Nobel Laureates, Isamu Akasaki passed away recently, he had won the prize in **Physics.**
Note: Akasaki, a professor at the university, had been recognized for the invention which has contributed to bright and energy-saving white light sources, widely known as LED lamps. He was honoured in 1997 by the Japanese government with the Medal with Purple Ribbon, an honour bestowed on those who have made contributions to academic and artistic developments.

2. Renowned personality Shashikala Om Prakash Saigal passed away recently, she was veteran **Actress.**
Note: She was featured in over 100 popular movies like Bimla, Sujata, Aarti, Anupama, Gumrah, Khubsoorat, Mujhse Shaadi Karogi and Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham. She was awarded with Padma Shri in 2007

3. Renowned personality P Balachandran passed away recently, he was a veteran **Malayalam Actor.**
Note: About 50 Malayalam film fall under his credit as an actor and screenwriter. His character in the film 'Trivandrum Lodge' was noteworthy. He is noted for his works like Punaradhivasam and Kammatipaadam. Punaradhivasam has won a national award and two state awards, while critically acclaimed Kammatipaadam

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grabbed four state awards. He won two major awards, the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award and Kerala Professional Nataka Award for his play 'Paavam Usman' in 1989.

4. Renowned politician Bhagwati Singh passed away recently, he was associated with **Samajwadi Party.**
Note: A Samajwadi Party member of the Rajya Sabha from July 2004 to 2010, Bhagwati Singh joined the socialist movement following inspiration from the socialist ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia. Bhagwati Singh was a member of Mulayam cabinet and later stood by Akhilesh Yadav when he was elected as the SP national president. He led the management of Chandrabhanu Gupta Agriculture College in Bakshi ka Talab.
5. **Chandra Naidu was** India's first female cricket commentator who passed away recently.
Note: She had done her first commentary during a match between national champions Bombay (now Mumbai) and MCC in Indore in 1977. She had also penned a book titled 'CK Nayudu: A Daughter Remembers' on her late father, who was a distinguished cricketer.
6. Renowned personality Fatima Rafiq Zakaria passed away recently he was a veteran **Journalist.**
Note: She was awarded the Padma Shri in recognition of her work in education in 2006. Ms Zakaria, who had played an eminent role in the field of education, was also honoured with the Sarojini Naidu Integration Award for Journalism in 1983.
7. Renowned personality Ramsey Clark passed away recently, he was a former Attorney General of **USA.**
Note: Clark, one of the architects of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 and Civil Rights Act of 1968. In a lengthy career of representing unpopular causes, Clark defended or gave advice to Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, Liberian political figure Charles Taylor and Iraq's Saddam Hussein.
8. Renowned personality Satish Kaul passed away recently, he was a veteran **Actor.**
Note: The actor began his career in the early '70s, juggling between Hindi and Punjabi films. While his popular Bollywood films include Ram Lakhan, Pyaar Toh Hona Hi Tha and Aunty No 1 etc.
9. Renowned sportsman and coach Sanjay Chakravarty passed away recently, he was associated with **Shooting.**
Note: Legendary shooting coach Sanjay Chakravarty passed away due to Covid-19. The Dronacharya awardee had trained some of the finest Indian shooters including Abhinav Bindra, Gagan Narang, Anjali Bhagwat and Suma Shirur, Deepali Deshpande, Anuja Jung and Ayonika Paul.
10. Renowned sportsperson Balbir Singh Junior passed away recently, he was associated with **Hockey.**
Note: Born on May 2, 1932, at Sansarpur in Jalandhar, also known as the nursery of Indian hockey, Balbir Singh Junior had played alongside legends like Balbir Singh Senior, Leslie Claudius, Prithipal Singh, Balkishan and Charles Stephen among others. He was part of the Punjab state hockey team and also captained Panjab University team.
11. Ramon Magsaysay awardee Ibn Abdur Rehman passed away recently, he was a veteran **Human rights activist.**
Note: Rehman spent his life defending human rights, opposing military dictators, fighting for the rule of law and democracy. He was also a strong voice for the country's minorities, including Christians and Hindus. Rehman worked as an editor for various newspapers before joining the commission. He regularly contributed articles for several Pakistani newspapers.
12. Renowned personality Yogesh Praveen passed away recently, he was a veteran **Historian.**
Note: Because of his immense knowledge about the history of lucknow , Yogesh Praveen is known as the Encyclopedia of awadh and Lucknow history. He wrote many books including 'Shantranj ke khiladi' and 'Umrao jaan' which was later taken as a movie. Apart from being an author, he had also written lyrics for the movie Junoon.
13. Famous sportsman Ahmed Hussain Lala has passed away due to COVID-19, he was associated with **Football.**
Note: He represented India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, where India finished fourth. Besides, he was also part of the Indian team that won the gold medal in the 1951 Asian Games. Ahmed also took part in the 1958 Asian Games in Tokyo, Japan, in which India finished fourth.
14. Famous Dr Kakarla Subba Rao, who served as the first director of Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Hyderabad, passed away recently, he was a veteran **Radiologist.**
Note: Rao was conferred Padma Shri in 2000, by the Government of India for his contributions to the field of medicine. He was the founder president of the Telugu Association of North America (TANA), an umbrella organisation for Telugu speaking people in the United States.
15. Former Union Minister Bachi Singh Rawat has passed away recently, he was associated with **BJP.**
Note: He was a four-time MP from the Almora-Pithoragarh constituency in Uttarakhand. He had served as the Union Minister of State for Science and Technology in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government
16. National Awardee Sumitra Bhave has passed away recently, she was a veteran **Filmmaker.**

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Note: She was known for her out-of-the-box content and also for the way she handled social issues in her films. The duo of Sumitra and Sunil together directed several popular films like Doghi, Dahavi Fa, Vastupurush, Devrai, Badha, Ek Cup Chya, Samhita, Astu, Kaasav, among others.

17. Veteran writer Ganjam Venkatasubbiah passed away recently; he was a writer of **Kannada** language.
Note: He was commonly known as a walking encyclopedia of Kannada language and culture, in his literary circles. Professor G Venkatasubbaiah had compiled 12 dictionaries and had authored around 60 books. He received the Padma Shri in 2017 for his proficiency in Kannada literature, poetry, essays and translations.

18. Renowned personality Charles Geschke passed away recently he was a computer scientist and founder of **Adobe Inc.**
Note: American computer scientist Charles Geschke, best known as the co-founder of graphics and publishing software company Adobe Inc, has passed away. Geschke co-founded Adobe company in 1982 with fellow mate John Warnock. Geschke, who was widely known as Chuck, also helped in developing the popular Portable Document Format (PDF).

19. Former governor of the Reserve Bank of India also known as "Father of Indian Banking Reforms", **Maidavolu Narasimham** passed away recently.
Note: He was the 13th Governor of RBI and served from May 2, 1977, to November 30, 1977. He was known for being the chair of two high-powered committees on banking and financial sector reforms.

20. Renowned politician, diplomat, and lawyer Walter Mondale passed away recently, he was former vice president of **USA.**
Note: Former American politician, diplomat, and lawyer Walter Mondale, who served as the 42nd Vice President of the United States, has passed away. He served as Vice President from 1977 to 1981 under President Jimmy Carter. He also served as U.S. ambassador to Japan from 1993 to 1996 under Bill Clinton.

21. Renowned politician Bhumidhar Barman passed away recently, he was former chief minister of **Assam.**
Note: Bhumidhar Barman had served as CM of Assam twice.His first term was between April 22, 1996 to May 14,1996 and second term was during 2010.During both periods he acted as an interim CM. He belonged to Indian National Congress(INC) and had also represented the Barkhetry Constituency.

22. Renowned personality Sankha Ghosh passed away recently, he was a veteran **Poet.**
Note: Ghosh was one of most important names in Bengali poetry and, together with Shakti Chattopadhyay, Alokeranjan Dasgupta and Sunil Gangopadhyay, was said to have carried on the baton from the poets of the early part of the 20th century, such as Jibanananda Das and Buddhadev Basu. He was awarded the Jnanpith Award in 2016 and the Padma Bhushan in 2011. Considered an authority on Tagore, Ghosh was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977 for his poetry collection Babarer Prarthana.

23. Famous Table Tennis player **Suhas Kulkarni** passed away recently.
Note: After his retirement from active sports he contributed to the sport as a Coach. He has played in the Masters Table Tennis Tournaments at National and International level. He won the national Masters TT Championship 2019 held in Indore.

24. Padma Bhushan awardee Rajan Mishra passed away recently he was a veteran **classical singer.**
Note: Rajan Mishra was a famous classical singer from 'Banaras Gharana' of India. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in the field of art in 2007. Their proclaimed works include 'Bhairav Se Bhairavi Tak', 'Bhaktimala', 'Durgati Nashini Durga', 'Aarti kijai hanuman lala ki', and more.

25. National award winner Waman Bhonsle passed away recently he was a veteran **Film Editor.**
Note: He won the best editing award at the 25th National Film award for "Inkaar". In his four-decade-long career, he worked with several noted filmmakers including Subhash Ghai, Shekar Kapur, Mahesh Bhatt, Gulzaar, Raj Sippy, Anil Ganguly, Sunil Dutt, others.

26. Renowned personality Jagdish Khattar passed away recently, he was former Managing Director of **Maruti Suzuki.**
Note: Khattar (79), a former bureaucrat, was considered as one of the most high profile leaders of the Indian automotive industry, laying the foundation for Maruti's future growth after the government began its disinvestment in 2002 and gradually exited from its joint venture with Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC). He had joined the then Maruti Udyog Ltd in July 1993 as director (marketing) and went on to become executive director (marketing) in the next six years.

27. Renowned personality Krishnamurthy Santhanam passed away recently he was a veteran **Nuclear scientist.**
Note: He was deeply associated with DRDO, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). Santhanam was the field director of Defence Research and Development Organization during the tests of Pokhran-II. He was awarded with the Padma

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Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award, in 1999 by the Government of India.

28. Renowned personality and Padma Shri awardee Manzoor Ahtesham passed away recently he was a veteran **Hindi litterateur.**
Note: Incidentally, Ahthesham''s first story was titled ''Ramzan Ki Maut'' and he died in the holy month currently underway.

29. Renowned personality Michael Collins passed away recently; he was a famous **Astronaut.**
Note: He stayed behind in the command module of Apollo 11 on July 20, 1969, while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin traveled to the lunar surface to become the first humans to walk on the moon. Often described as the "forgotten" third astronaut on the historic mission, Collins remained alone for more than 21 hours until his two colleagues returned in the lunar module.

30. Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awardee Manoj Das passed away recently he was a veteran **writer.**
Note: Manoj Das was awarded Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhusan in 2020 for his contribution in the field of Literature & Education. He was teaching English Literature and the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo at the Sri Aurobindo International University.

Important Days

1. International Children's Book Day (ICBD) is organised every year on **2nd April** to inspire love of reading and to call attention to children's books.
Note: It was first observed in 1967 by International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). Each year a different National Section of IBBY has the opportunity to be the international sponsor of ICBD and decide upon a theme. IBBY United States is the sponsor for International Children's Book Day 2021. Theme 2021: The Music of Words.

2. **Recognise the Genius in Me'** is the theme of the World Autism Awareness Day 2021.
Note: It is a day that spread kindness and autism awareness. Theme: 'Recognise the Genius in Me'. Autism is a neurodevelopment disorder characterized by deficits in social and language communication, as well as repetitive behaviours and restricted interests.

3. The United Nations' International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed every year on **4th April.**
Note: This day aims to raise awareness about landmines and progress toward their eradication. This year, the theme of International Mine Awareness Day is Perseverance, Partnership, and Progress. This year, the UN has laid focus to advance the work so that new partnerships can be formed.

4. International Day of Conscience is celebrated every year on **5th April.**
Note: Declared by the United Nations, this day is observed in order to self-reflect on our life and try and do the right things all the time. The purpose behind this was simple. People's conscience helps to act upon certain situations in the best way possible. It also empowers to do better in society.

5. The International Day of Conscience is celebrated every year on **5th April.**
Note: The International Day of Conscience is a global day of awareness celebrated on April 5, commemorating the importance of the human conscience. This day serves to remind people to self-reflect, follow their conscience, and do the right things.

6. International Day of Sport for Development and Peace is observed every year on **6th April.**
Note: The day as the name suggests is marked to celebrate the positive contribution of sports towards sustainable development and advancement of human rights. The day came into existence after the UN General Assembly passed resolution 67/296 in 2013.

7. World Health Day is observed every year on **7th April.**
Note: World Health Day is observed every year on April 7 to create awareness of a specific health theme to highlight a priority area of concern for World Health Organization. Theme for World Health Day 2021: "Building a fairer, healthier world for everyone".

8. The World Chagas Disease Day is observed every year on **14th April.**
Note: he WHO approved the designation of Chagas Disease Day on May 24, 2019, at the 72nd World Health Assembly. It is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by WHO.

9. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Valour Day (Shaurya Diwas) is observed every year on **9th April.**
Note: It was on this day in 1965, a small contingent of CRPF created history by defeating an invading Pakistani army, several time larger, at the Sardar Post located in the **Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.** The CRPF men eliminated 34 Pakistani soldiers and captured four alive. In the conflict, CRPF lost six personnel who had attained martyrdom.

10. World Homeopathy Day is celebrated every year on **10th April** to spread awareness about homoeopathy and its contribution to the world of medicine.
Note: The day marks the birth anniversary of German physician Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, who is considered the founder of the system of alternative medicine called Homeopathy. The year 2021 marks the 266th birthday of Hahnemann.
11. The International Day of Human Space Flight is observed globally every year on **12th April.**
Note: The UN General Assembly passed a resolution on April 7, 2011, had declared April 12 to be celebrated as **International Day of Human Space Flight.** On 12 April 1961, was the date of the 1st human space flight was carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen, who became the first person to journey into outer space.
12. World Hemophilia Day is annually observed across the globe on **17th April** to create awareness about Hemophilia and other bleeding disorders**.**
Note: The day is an effort to provide better diagnosis and access to care for the people with Hemophilia. The April 17th Marks the birth anniversary of Frank Schnabel, the founder of the World Federation of Hemophilia. The theme of World Hemophilia Day 2021 is "Adapting to change: sustaining care in a new world".
13. **Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures** is the theme of the World Heritage Day observing every year on 18th April.
Note: It is also aimed at promoting historical monuments and sites through which we can actually preserve the cultural integrity of a community as well. This year's theme "Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures" reflects on the need to acknowledge global calls for greater inclusion and recognition of diversity.
14. World Liver Day is observed every year on **19 April.**
Note: The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, with the exception of the brain. Liver diseases can be caused by hepatitis A, B, C, alcohol and drugs. Viral Hepatitis occurs due to consumption of contaminated food and water, unsafe sexual practices and drug abuse.
15. UN Chinese Language Day is observed globally every year on **20th April.**
Note: The day has been chosen to pay tribute to Cangjie, who is a mythical figure who is presumed to have invented Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago. The 1st Chinese Language Day was celebrated in 2010 on the 12th of November, but since 2011 the date has been on the 20th of April.
16. In India, 'National Civil Services Day' is celebrated every year on **21st April.**
Note: It is a day to appreciate the tremendous work done by officers engaged in public administration, in various departments of the central and state governments. The Government of India chose April 21 as the National Civil Service Day as on this day the country's first home minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the newly appointed Administrative Services Officers in 1947.
17. World Creativity and Innovation Day is observed globally every year on **21st April.**
Note: This day is celebrated to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem-solving with respect to advancing the United Nations sustainable development goals, also known as the "global goals". The main objective of the day is to encourage people to use new ideas, make new decisions, and do creative thinking. Creativity is what makes the world go 'round.
18. **Restore Our Earth** is the theme of the International Mother Earth Day 2021.
Note: Earth Day or International Mother Earth Day is observed globally on 22 April every year. The Day will be celebrated all over the world to spread awareness for Earth's wellbeing and to encourage people to support environmental protection. World Earth Day 2021 will mark the 51st Anniversary of the day since it started being observed in 1970.
19. World Book Copyrights Day is celebrated very year on **23rd April** by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).
Note: As a celebration of this year's World's Book and Copyright Day 2021, UNESCO has created a 'Bookface' challenge. The first World Book and Copyrights Day was celebrated in 1995. The UNESCO decided to celebrate the World Book and Copyrights Day on April 23 to commemorate the death anniversary of William Shakespeare. As per UNESCO, the city of Tbilisi in Georgia was selected as the World Book Capital for 2021.
20. The World Intellectual Property Day is celebrated every year on **26th April.**
Note: The day was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000. The day this is id dedicated to the Small and medium-sized enterprises. SMEs account for 90% of all companies worldwide and 70% of global employment that's why World IP Day 2021 is carrying the theme "IP and SMEs: Taking your ideas to market."
21. The International Jazz Day is celebrated every year **30th April** to highlight the importance of jazz and its

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diplomatic role in uniting people in all corners of the globe.
Note: The 2021 celebration marks the 10th Anniversary of International Jazz Day. The day was created on the idea of jazz pianist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock. The musical form of Jazz was developed by African Americans. It was influenced by both European harmonic structure and African rhythms. It originated in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

22. Ayushman Bharat Diwas is observed every year on **30th April.**
Note: On that day in 2018 Ayushman Bharat Yojna was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to provide healthcare benefits to crores of Indians who can't afford proper medical facilities. The flagship scheme of the Narendra Modi government was launched along the lines of a universal health coverage to meet one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations - "leave no one behind." The Ayushman Bharat Diwas 2021 Theme is "Seva Bhi – Rozgar Bhi".

New Appointments

1. **Subhash Kumar** takes the additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**.**
Note: He is presently serving as the Director (Finance) at ONGC. He succeeded Shashi Shanker, who superannuated on March 31, 2021. Subhash Kumar has over 36 years of experience in diverse activities across Exploration & Production (E&P) value chain.
2. **Mukhmeet S. Bhatia** has been appointed as the as the Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).
Note: He has worked as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance. He has also served as the Principal Secretary in Dept. of Labour & Employment and Women & Child Development in Jharkhand.
3. **Mallika Srinivasan** has been appointed as the chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) **_____.**
Note: Chairman and Managing Director of Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) Limited, Mallika Srinivasan has been appointed as the chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), an order issued by the personnel ministry. This is for the first time that a private sector specialist has been appointed as the head of the PESB, responsible for the appointment of top management posts in the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).
4. **Urjit Patel** has recently been appointed as the additional director of at Britannia Industries board.
Note: The Board of Britannia Industries has appointed former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Urjit Patel as the Additional Director of the company. He has been appointed for a period of five years, in the category of Non-Executive and Independent Director.
5. **Shabir Hussein Shekhadam Khandwawala** has been appointed as the head of the BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit.
Note: Khandwawala, a 1973 batch IPS officer, has been appointed ahead of the IPL beginning April 9. He retired as Gujarat DGP in December 2010. After that he was an advisor to the Essar Group for 10 years. He has also been a part of the central government's Lokpal Search Committee, which was mandated to appoint the Lokpal.
6. **N V Ramana** has been appointed as the 48th Chief Justice of India.
Note: Justice Ramana will have a term till August 26th next year. Before his elevation to the Supreme Court on February 17th, 2014, Justice Ramana was the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court. He was born in an agricultural family in Andhra Pradesh.
7. **Virat Kohli** has been appointed as Brand Ambassador of Digit Insurance.
Note: Digit Insurance, a general insurance company that became the first unicorn of 2021 with a valuation of $1.9B. With this association, the company aims to carry the message of 'making insurance simple' through the cricketer. Digit was able to get the Indian Men's Cricket Team Captain to invest in the company before he planned to become the face for the brand.
8. **Tarun Bajaj** has been appointed as the new revenue secretary under the Ministry of Finance.
Note: Tarun Bajaj has been appointed as the new revenue secretary under Ministry of Finance. He will take additional charge of Secretary, Department of Revenue, after the superannuation of Ajay Bhushan Pandey.
9. **Chintan Vaishnav** has been appointed the mission director of Atal Innovation Mission (AIM).
Note: Chintan Vaishnav has been appointed as the mission director of Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), the government's flagship initiative under NITI Aayog. He will succeed Ramanathan Ramanan.
10. **S Ramann** has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of SIDBI.

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Note: The appointment is for a period of three years from the date of his assuming the charge or until further orders. Ramann, a 1991-batch Indian Audit & Accounts Service officer, is currently the CEO of National E-Governance Services Ltd, India's first Information Utility.

11. **Poonam Gupta** has been appointed as the Director General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
    Note: Gupta will succeed the current head of the think tank, Shekhar Shah, to become the first woman to hold the post. Prior to joining the World Bank in 2013, Gupta was the Reserve Bank of India Chair Professor at NIPFP, and a Professor of Macroeconomics at ICRIER.
12. **Sushil Chandra** has been appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner of India.
    Note: He succeeded Sunil Arora, whose tenure ended on April 12. Mr. Chandra took office as an Election Commissioner on February 15, 2019 after retiring as the chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes. A 1980 batch Indian Revenue Service officer, Mr. Chandra had worked in the areas of international taxation and investigation.
13. **Sonu Sood** has been appointed as the brand ambassador for Punjab's COVID vaccination drive.
    Note: During the coronavirus-induced lockdown last year, the actor had helped migrants reach their home states. Sood catapulted to the national spotlight for feeding thousands of underprivileged people amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - He was viewed as a messiah of sorts for migrants.
14. **Prithavi Shaw** has been appointed as the brand ambassador of SportzXchange, a fantasy sports platform.
    Note: SportzXchange will create engaging content featuring Prithvi Shaw as part of an integrating campaign with a theme "Yahaan Hai Kuch Xtra" that will help build awareness about the differentiated offerings and amplify the reach of the brand during upcoming IPL/Fantasy matches.
15. Guillermo Lasso elected new President of **Ecuador.**
    Note: Guillermo Lasso, 65 years old, received over 52% of the vote to clinch the presidency, his third attempt at running for office. He defeated Andrés Arauz, a 36-year-old leftist economist and protégé of powerful ex-president Rafael Correa. Mr. Arauz conceded with more than 95% of votes counted.
16. **Suresh Raina** has been appointed as the Brand Ambassador of Consumer electronic company, 'Elista'.
    Note: Consumer electronic company, 'Elista' appointed former Indian Cricketer Suresh Raina as its Brand Ambassador. Elista is a subsidiary of 'TeknoDome' , a UAE based trading company, which started its manufacturing in 2020. Elista manufactures innovative products in consumer electronics ranging from LED TVs to Coolers, under the concept of 'Making in India for the world'.
17. **Siddharth Singh Longjam** has been appointed as the Director-General (DG) of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).
    Note: Ganapathy, a 1986 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Uttarakhand cadre, is currently Director General, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS). He has been appointed the Director-General, National Security Guard (NSG), from the date of joining the post and up to February 29, 2024 i.e. date of his superannuation.
18. **M. Rajeshwar Rao** has been appointed as the head of the Regulatory Review Authority, RRA 2.0 set up by the Reserve Bank of India that will review regulatory prescriptions.
    Note: he authority will review regulatory prescriptions internally as well as by seeking suggestions from RBI-regulated entities for simplification and ease of implementation. Deputy Governor M. Rajeshwar Rao has been appointed as the Regulations Review Authority. The authority would have validity for a period of one year from May 1, 2021, unless its tenure is extended by the RBI.
19. Under the chairmanship of **Rameshwar Prasad Gupta** the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has formed an eight-member National Task Force (NTF) to monitor the remedial steps to improve the status of air quality.
    Note: NTF will be headed by and coordinated by the Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forests, Rameshwar Prasad Gupta. India has the World's highest death rate from chronic respiratory diseases and 1.5 million people in India are dying annually due to air pollution. It will monitor the enforcement of air quality standards in all the Non-Attainment Cities along with other air polluted areas through quarterly meetings with the Chief Secretaries of concerned States/UTs.
20. Murali M. Natrajan is the Managing Director & CEO of **DCB Bank** whose re-appointment has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India.
    Note: He was appointed as MD and CEO of DCB Bank in May 2009. Prior to joining DCB, Natrajan has worked with foreign banks Standard Chartered & Citibank.

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21. **Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel** has been officially sworn in as the 'First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba', following the resignation of Raul Castro.
Note: The Secretary of the Communist Party is the most powerful position in one party ruling Cuba. Díaz-Canel now holds Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state. Raúl Castro announced that he would step down from the key position of the party and hand over the leadership to a younger generation.
22. Indian Cricketer **Washington Sundar & Devdutt Padikkal** have been appointed as the brand ambassador of Puma India, the leading German sportswear brand.
Note: In March 2021, Puma signed as the official kit partners of the Royal Challengers Bangalore(RCB) in the IPL 2021 season. Washington Sundar(21 years old) from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is the youngest T20I cricketer(18 years) to represent India at International level in 2017. DevduttPadikkal(20 years old) from Edappal, Kerala, is an Indian cricketer who represents Karnataka and India under 19s.
23. **Kim Boo-kyum** has been appointed as the new prime minister of South Korea.
Note: He will replace former PM Chung Sye-kyun who resigned to run in the 2022 presidential election. Currently, Hong Nam-ki is serving as the Acting Prime Minister of South Korea. He will be appointed only after, the parliament of South Korea approved the nomination of the President. The president has also nominated new ministers for Labour, Land, Science, Trade and Oceans Ministry.
24. **Justice Sanjay Yadav** has been appointed as the Acting Chief Justice (CJ) of Allahabad High Court by President Ram Nath Kovind**.**
Note: He assumed charge as the Acting CJ on 14th April 2021, succeeding Justice Govind Mathur who retired on 13th April 2021. Department of Justice, under the Ministry of Law and Justice notified regarding the appointment. Justice Sanjay Yadav, started his career in 1986 and practiced in the High Court of Madhya Pradesh(MP) at Jabalpur.
25. **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been appointed as External Auditor of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for a three-year term starting 2021.
Note: The appointment was made during an election process held at the OPCW Conference of State Parties held on April 21, 2021. India was also selected as a member of the Executive council of the OPCW representing the Asia group for another 2-year term. It is an intergovernmental organisation and Implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, which entered into force on 29th April 1997.
26. **Arun Raste** has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX) for a term of five years.
Note: He succeeded Vijay Kumar. Arun Raste is currently working as an executive director in National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). He has also worked in organisations like IDFC First Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, NABARD, ACC Cement, and a non-profit NGO IRFT.
27. **Rekha M Menon** became the first women to appointed as chairperson of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM).
Note: Accenture India's chairperson, Rekha M Menon has been appointed as chairperson of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), becoming the first woman to take the top role in the software lobby group's 30-year history. She succeeds U B Pravin Rao, chief operating officer of Infosys as Nasscom's chairperson. TCS President Krishnan Ramanujam will be the vice-chairperson.
28. **Atanu Chakraborty** has been appointed as the part-time chairman and additional independent director of the private sector lender HDFC Bank.
Note: He retired as Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs in April 2020. Prior to that, he served as Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). Chakraborty, a 1985 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, has been appointed for a period of three years with effect from May 5, 2021 or the date of his taking charge, whichever is later.
29. **TV Somanathan** has been appointed as the new finance secretary of India whose appointment has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.
Note: He is a 1987 batch IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre. The senior-most officer among all secretaries in the Finance Ministry is designated as the Finance Secretary.
30. **Amit Banerjee** has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Bharat Earth Movers Limited, (BEML).
Note: The PESB announced on meeting held on April 26, 2021. Currently, he is serving as Director (Rail & Metro), BEML Limited. In his professional career spanning over three decades in BEML, Shri Banerjee has worked in R&D and manufacturing functions.

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31. **Ravindra Jadeja** has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Japanese Sportswear brand ASICS

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Note: ASICS focuses on sporting gear for the running category. ASICS has been working with young and fresh athletic talent across various genres of sports. In India, ASICS is promoted by actor Tiger Shroff. In Asia, ASICS currently has over 55 stores across India, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

32. Amitabh Chaudhry has been reappointed as Managing Director and CEO of **Axis Bank** for three years with effect from January 1, 2022.
Note: The appointment will be subject to the approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and shareholders of the bank, the filing added. Chaudhry was appointed as Managing Director (MD) and CEO of Axis Bank for a period of three years, with effect from January 1, 2019 up to December 31, 2021.

Important News – India

1. **140th** is India's rank in the in the Global Gender Gap index 2021 among 156 countries, released by World Economic Forum.
Note: India was ranked 112th among 153 countries in 2020. India emerged as the third-worst performing country in South Asia. Iceland has topped the index for 12th time, followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Rwanda, Sweden, Ireland and Switzerland. Afghanistan is the worst-performing country in the report. The Global Gender Gap Report 2021 is 15th edition of the annual publication by WEF
2. Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Mansukh Mandaviya, virtually flagged off the Cruise Ship service between Hazira Port of Surat and **Diu.**
Note: Between 2014 to 2020, Cruise calls at Indian Ports have increased from 139 calls with around 1 lakh passengers to 450 calls with over 4.5 lakh passengers. Indian Govt. is planning for 6 International Cruise Terminals
3. India's biggest floating solar power plant with a capacity of 100 megawatt is expected to become operational in **Telangana.**
Note: The project has been set up by the energy conglomerate National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) in the reservoir of its thermal power plant at Ramagundam, Peddapalli district. The solar photo-voltaic project, spread over 450 acres, will have 4.5 lakh photovoltaic panels and it can be expanded in the future.
4. **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)** has won the number one rank in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2020 also known as Shanghai Ranking.
Note: As per the ARWU Ranking 2020 of top institutions in India, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) was on the number one rank while the University of Calcutta was on the third spot among all premier higher educational institutions in the country. Calcutta University has secured first place among Indian universities and third position among top higher educational institutions in the country in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2020.
5. Spices Board India is under administrative control of **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has signed an MoU with UNDP India's Accelerator Lab to build a blockchain based traceability interface for Indian spices to enhance transparency in supply chain and trade.
Note: Blockchain is a decentralized process of recording transactions on an open and shared electronic ledger. This allows for ease and transparency in data management across a complex network, including, farmers, brokers, distributors, processors, retailers, regulators, and consumers, thus simplifying the supply chain.
6. **Dr BR Ambedkar** birth anniversary has been declared as a public holiday 2021, under Section 25 of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.
Note: As per an official order of Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Central government offices, Industrial Establishments throughout the country will also remain closed on the 14th April BR Ambedkar inspired Dalit Buddhist movement and was independent India's first Minister of Law and Justice.
7. **Anamaya** initiative jointly launched by the Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda to enhance the health and nutrition status of the tribal communities.
Note: A multi-stakeholder initiative supported by Piramal Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Anameya' will converge efforts of various Government agencies and organisations to enhance the health and nutrition status of the tribal communities.
8. **Narendra Singh Tomar** has launched the "मधुक्रान्तिपोर्टल" and Honey Corners of NAFED to enable traceability source of honey and other beehive products.

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Note: "मधुक्रान्तिपोर्टल" is an initiative of National Bee Board (NBB), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare under National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM). This portal is being developed for online registration to achieve traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform. The technical and banking partner for development of this digital platform is Indian Bank.

9. **Flipkart** partnered with Mahindra Logistics Limited (MLL) for fast-track deployment of electric vehicles across its logistics fleet.
   Note: The partnership is made for fast-track deployment of electric vehicles across its logistics fleet in the country. Both the entities will develop a conducive environment for EV deployment and operations in India. They will jointly develop supportive infrastructure and technology like charging stations and parking lots, training workforce, route planning and battery swapping stations.
10. **$500,000** has been contributed by India to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism.
    Note: India has contributed an additional $500,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism, taking the country's donation to the UN office set up to combat terrorism to over $1 million. With this amount, India's total contribution to it so far is $1.05 million.
11. **SUPACE** Artificial Intelligence portal has been launched by the Supreme Court of India.
    Note: Through this portal, the SC intends to leverage machine learning to deal with the vast amounts of data received at the time of filing of cases. Justice L Nageshwara Rao, who is also the chairman of the SC's Artificial Intelligence Committee, delivered the opening address during the virtual launch of SUPACE.
12. Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' presented Lilavati Awards 2020 on women empowerment, the award was instituted by **AICTE.**
    Note: The awards ceremony was be based on the theme of women empowerment. Based on the theme 'Women Empowerment', AICTE finalized the winners of Lilavati Awards 2020 from a total of 456 entries who competed across 6 sub themes, which include:
    - ✓ Women's Health
    - ✓ Self-Defense
    - ✓ Sanitation and Hygiene
    - ✓ Literacy
    - ✓ Women Entrepreneurship
    - ✓ Legal Awareness.

    The winner received Rs 1 Lakh cash prize. First runner-up got Rs 75,000 and second runner up got Rs 50,000.
13. **SARTHAQ** initiative has been launched by the Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' to the implement the National Education Policy 2020.
    Note: The full form of SARTHAQ is 'Students' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement through Quality Education. This implementation plan was released as a part of the celebrations leading to the Amrit Mahotsav on 75 years of Indian independence. The plan delineates the roadmap for the implementation of NEP 2020 for the next 10 years.
14. **#ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control** is the theme of the 6th Edition of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue, jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.
    Note: The 6th Edition of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue, jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation,will be held virtually from 13-16 April, 2021. Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurated the Dialogue
15. **Ministry of External Affairs** has organized the 6th Edition of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue along with Observer Research Foundation.
    Note: The 6th Edition of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue, jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation,will be held virtually from 13-16 April, 2021. Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurated the Dialogue.
16. **NITI Aayog** has launched 'Poshan Gyan', a national digital repository on health and nutrition in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University.
    Note: NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University launched Poshan Gyan, a national digital repository on health and nutrition. The launch event was addressed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant, Women and Child Development Secretary Ram Mohan Mishra and Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal.
17. **e-SANTA** is the name of the e-marketplace that will connect aqua farmers and the buyers launched by Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal.
    Note: It will enable farmers to get a better price and the exporters to directly purchase quality products from them. The full form of the e-Santa is "Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers' Trade in Aquaculture"
18. **Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19** is the theme of the Global Food Policy Report 2021 published by the International Food Policy Research Institute.

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Note: This year the institute has released the report based on the theme "Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19". As per the report the severe health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have disrupted food systems and upended livelihoods.

19. **Aahaar Kranti** mission has been launched by the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan to raise awareness of the importance of nutritionally balanced diet and the importance of accessibility to all local fruits & vegetables.
    Note: It is a joint initiative of Vijnana Bharati (Vibha), Global Indian Scientists' and Technocrats' Forum (GIST), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) & Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark (PRABHASS). The motto of the Mission is Uttam Aahaar Uttam Vichaar or 'Good Diet-Good Cognition'. It aims to achieve nutritional balanced diets by emphasizing on consumption of locally sourced fruits and vegetables.
20. **MANAS** app has been launched by the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government for to promote wellbeing across age groups.
    Note: MANAS which stands for Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System was endorsed as a national program by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council. It is a comprehensive, scalable, and national digital wellbeing platform and an app developed to augment mental well-being of Indian citizens. The application integrates the health and wellness efforts of various government ministries, scientifically validated indigenous tools with gamified interfaces developed by various national bodies and research institutions.
21. India hosted the summit of BRICS Finance Ministers.
    Note: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasised the key role the BRICS group was playing in responding to the current global crisis through policy support and by enhancing international policy coordination. She was addressing the first meeting of BRICS finance ministers and central bank governors meeting virtually from New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Sitharaman and RBI governor Shaktikanta Das.
22. With **Microsoft** the Agricultural Ministry of India recently signed Memorandum of Understanding to implement a pilot project in 100 villages of six states to promote digital agriculture.
    Note: Microsoft will start a pilot project in 100 villages in 10 districts of 6 states (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh) to develop farmer interface for smart and well-organised agriculture, including post-harvest management and distribution. For this project, Microsoft has tied up with its local partner, CropData. The project is for one year and both sides inking the MoU will bear the cost on their own.
23. **49th** is India's rank in the 'Inclusive Internet Index' 2021 released by the Economist Intelligence Unit along with Facebook.
    Note: India is set to reach one billion internet users by 2025. There were over 687.6 million internet users in India in 2020. The Facebook 'Inclusive Internet Index' looked at 120 countries, representing 98 per cent of global GDP and 96 per cent of global population.
24. With online travel companies **Cleartrip & Ease My Trip** the Ministry of Tourism signed an MoU to strengthen the Hospitality & Tourism Industry especially during COVID.
    Note: The aim of the MoU is to provide extensive visibility to accommodation units which have self-certified themselves on SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for the Hospitality Industry) on OTA platform MoU also outlines both parties to encourage Units to register on NIDHI and thereby on SAATHI and encourage local tourism Industry.
25. **Piyush Goyal** launched the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) aims at providing financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market-entry, and commercialization.
    Note: The Fund aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market-entry, and commercialization. The government has approved Rs. 945 Crore corpus for the fund, which will be divided over the next 4 years beginning April 01, 2021, for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India. The scheme is expected to support an estimated 3,600 startups through 300 incubators.
26. **84th** is India's rank in the Henley Passport Index 2021.
    Note: India stands at number 84 on the list, as the Indian citizens can visit Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival in over 58 places. Japan, Singapore and Germany, South Korea stand in Top 3 respectively.
27. India ranked **142nd** in the latest World Press Freedom Index 2021, released by international non-profit and non-governmental organization "Reporters Without Borders (RSF).
    Note: In the report India has been classified among the world's most dangerous countries for journalists. India was at 142nd position in 2020 as well. India was ranked in the "bad" category, along with Brazil, Mexico and Russia. In south Asia, Nepal was placed 106, Sri Lanka

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127, Myanmar 140, Pakistan 145 and Bangladesh at the 152nd spot. China was ranked 177, and the US 44.

28. According to the National Climate Vulnerability Assessment report titled 'Climate Vulnerability Assessment for Adaptation Planning in India Using a Common Framework' released by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) **eight** eastern state have been identified as Highly Vulnerable to Climate Change.
Note: The 8 states are – Jharkhand, Mizoram, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal. Among all states, Assam, Bihar, and Jharkhand have over 60% districts in the category of highly vulnerable districts.

29. India has signed an agreement titled "Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment" on Technical cooperation with **Germany** over a virtual event in New Delhi.
Note: Deutsche Gesellschaftfür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (**GIZ**) GmbH India signed the agreement on behalf of the government of Germany. The project is expected to be a collaborative effort under the Indo-German bilateral development corporation on sustainable urban transformation. This project will be undertaken at national level in selected states (Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands) and in the cities of Kanpur, Kochi, Port Blair. Project period: **three and half years.**

30. Indian Army Chief General M M Naravane attended the Army Chiefs' Conclave that was held in **Bangladesh.**
Note: The Conclave was held on the sidelines of Multinational Military Exercise 'Shantir Ogroshena 2021' (Front Runner of Peace) held at Bangabandhu Senanibas (BBS), Bangladesh from April 4-12, 2021. During the conclave, Naravane delivered a keynote address on 'Changing Nature of Global Conflicts: Role of UN Peacekeepers'. He visited Bangladesh from April 8-12 on the invitation of Bangladesh Army General Aziz Ahmed.

31. India ranked **87th** in the Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) that tracks nations on the current performance of their energy systems across various aspects.
Note: The report was published by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The report, prepared in collaboration with Accenture, also draws on insights from ETI. The top 10 countries in the index are Western and Northern European countries, with Sweden in the first place, followed by Norway and Denmark. "China (68) and India (87), which collectively account for a third of global energy demand, have both made strong improvements over the past decade, despite coal continuing to play a significant role in their energy mix.

32. **Arvind Kejriwal** represented Delhi and India at the World Cities Cultural Forum (WCCF) 2021.
Note: It is a forum of 40 top cities of world including London, Tokyo and New York. The WCCF 2021 Forum was hosted by London. The WCCF is an annual summit attended by the deputy mayors for culture and heads of culture from the member cities & it will be hosted by each member City annually. The theme of WCCF 2021 is "The Future of Culture".

33. The Indian Air Force Commanders Conference 2021 took place in New Delhi, with theme '**Reorienting for the Future'.**
Note: The theme of the conference was – 'Reorienting for the Future'. Other subjects of discussions were identifying challenges across all threat domains, incorporation of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence & 5G into the service.

34. **Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Tamil Nadu** became the only Indian University to make it to the list of World's Top 100 Educational Institutions in the 3rd edition of Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2021.
Note: Apart from Amrita Vishwa University, two Indian Universities namely Karnataka-based JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research and Punjab-based Lovely Professional University were ranked in the list with a place in the 100-200 grouping. At the global level, University of Manchester (UK), University of Sydney (Australia) & RMIT University (Australia) grabbed the top 3 places.

35. The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **IIT Kharagpur** to set-up an Accelerator Centre for Research & Development in the institute.
Note: The centre will act as an incubation hub for creation & development of technological products. The Accelerator Centre will act similar to Central govt's "ASHA-India initiative". About Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA): Minister of State Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)– Hardeep Singh Puri.

36. Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) of Indian Air Force (IAF), Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria recently visited to **France.**
Note: During his visit he flagged off four Rafale aircraft for India. During his visit to France, he flagged off the four Rafale fighter jets for India from a Merignac airbase in France. These jets once inducted into service will complete the first Rafale squadron No. 17 Golden

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Arrows based at Ambala. The next(2nd) squadron will be based in Hasimara air base in West Bengal.

37. India ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI), which classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes.
Note: The Chandler Good Government Index shows the importance of measuring and investing in governance capabilities that matter. It highlights a key need for 'pracademics' in government – people who combine a rigorous understanding of research and data with a practical and grounded sense of what governments need to do to succeed. Finland has topped the CGGI list, in which each country is measured across over 50 open data points.
38. **Russia** becomes the fourth country with which India has decided to hold '2+2 ministerial dialogue' between foreign, defence ministers.
Note: 2+2 Ministerial is the highest-level institutional mechanism between the two countries. It is a format of dialogue where the defence/foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.
39. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) has certified around 14, 491 Hectares of land as 'Organic Area' under the 'Large Area Certification (LAC)' scheme in **Car Nicobar and Nancowry Islands.**
Note: It became the 1st large contiguous territory to be conferred with organic certification. LAC is a certification programme under the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare's (DAC&FW) flagship scheme 'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)'. The organic certification will help farmers in getting direct access to the emerging organic food market of the country.

Important News – State

1. Mati Festival is celebrated in **Purvanchal.**
Note: The first edition of the Purvanchal Festival 'Maati' took place in 2018 with the objective of promoting folk art and melody, traditional food, literature, ethnic culture and tourism of the culturally rich Purvanchal (Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Basti, Gonda, Azamgarh, Mirzapur and Prayag divisions and entire Awadh region of Uttar Pradesh).
2. **Rajasthan** becomes the first state to commission India's first Farm-based Solar Power Project under the PM-KUSUM scheme.
Note: It has a capacity of 1 megawatt and is spread over on 3.5-acre semi-barren land. It has been developed at an investment of nearly INR 3.7 Crore. The power generated by the project will be purchased by Rajasthan VidhyutVitran Nigam Ltd (at the rate of INR 3.14 per unit).
3. **Rajasthan** becomes the first state in India to provide health insurance of up to INR 5 Lakh to each Family every year under Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Swasthya Bima Yojana.
Note: With this launch, Rajasthan became the 1st State in India to provide health insurance of up to INR 5 Lakh to each Family every year. The announcement of the Health Insurance Scheme was made during the presentation of the State Budget for the FY 2021-22. The Scheme is worth INR 3, 500 Crore.
4. The World Bank has approved a USD 32 Million (Rs. 234.80 Crores) for the improvement of healthcare system in **Mizoram.**
Note: The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved a USD 32 Million (~INR 234.80 Crores) Project titled 'Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project' for improving management capacity and quality of health services in Mizoram. The project will help Mizoram to improve quality certification at health facilities, enhance human resources, improve health insurance and other innovations.
5. The World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have approved the loan for the 300 Million USD (around Rs.2190 crore) canal-based drinking water project in **Punjab.**
Note: The World Bank(WB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have approved the loan for the 300 Million USD (around Rs.2190 crore) canal-based drinking water project in Punjab. The entire project will be co-financed by International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) of World Bank (USD 105 million), AIIB (USD 105 million) and the Government of Punjab (USD 90 million).
6. **West Bengal** emerge as the highest contributor to the small savings schemes such as NSC and PPF _____.
Note: It is followed by Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in terms of population, with gross collection of Rs 69,660.70 crore out of the Rs 5.96 lakh crore garnered during 2017-18 (last updated), as per data collated by the National Savings Institute under the finance ministry. The rate of interest on various small savings schemes for the first quarter of 2021-22 starting from April 1 and ending on June 30, 2021 would remain unchanged from those

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notified for the fourth quarter (January 1 to March 31, 2021) of 2020-21.

7. Amboli is located in **Maharshtra** in Western ghats has been declared as a biodiversity heritage site recently.
Note: This biodersity site has discovered a rare freshwater fish species Schistura Hiranyakeshi Earlier, Glory of Allapalli in Gadchiroli district, Landor Khori Park in Jalgaon, Ganesh Khind in Pune, myristica swamp vegetation in Sindhudurg district has been declared biodiversity heritage sites. Biodiversity Heritage Sites are notified areas of biodiversity importance in India.
8. **Uttar Pradesh** state government has launched a unique gift scheme to promote Covid vaccination in the state.
Note: UP govt will conduct a lucky draw for those who have taken the vaccine on World Health Day on 7th April Districts with more than 25,000 beneficiaries with doses of vaccine, will be eligible for this gift scheme. 4 gifts will be given to the beneficiaries after lucky draw.
9. **World Bank** is financing Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project.
Note: Government of Mizoram is implementing Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project. World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved a $32 million Project to improve management capacity and quality of health services in Mizoram.
10. **Odisha** state government has launched 14 days mask Abhiyan to counter the spread of covid 19 infections.

Note: Aim: to turn the use of a mask into a habit. This will play a huge role in controlling the current resurgence of COVID-19. Also, the Odisha State Government has increased the fines for violators from Rs 1000 to Rs 2000.
11. **Maharshtra** state got India's first floating LNG storage and regasification unit.
Note: FSRU based LNG Terminals aim at providing the ability to enhance the pace of natural gas import capability in an environment-friendly and efficient manner". The port is the first deepwater, 24×7 operational private port in Maharashtra.
12. **Ladakh** signed an MoU with Solar Energy Corporation of India to set up 50-Mega Watt solar power project _____.
Note: Union Territory Administration, Leh Hill Council and Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI Ltd) have signed MoU to set up a 50 MW solar power project at Taru in Leh district. Ladakh has a potential of 33GW of renewable energy to contribute nation's efforts in reducing carbon emissions. UT Administration, Leh Hill Council and Solar Energy Corporation of India have signed 1st MoU to harness Solar energy with a 50 MW project at Taru in Leh.
13. _____ **Rs 1,210.17 crore** has been approved for Highway Projects in Uttarakhand by the union government.
Note: These projects are for building 231.04 kms of highways. These include strengthening work of National Highway-309B on EPC (engineering, construction and procurement) mode in Uttarakhand under State Public Works Department (PWD) with a budget of Rs 48.19 crore.
14. **Rajasthan** state government has announced Jan Anushasan Pakhwara (JAP) or Public Discipline Fortnight.
Note: The decision came on a day when the state crossed 10,000 new cases for the first time. JAP is essentially an extension of the curfew the Rajasthan government had announced for the weekend. However, the government has neither called it a lockdown, nor a curfew, mainly because of the interpretations associated with both, as they have been implemented in the past.
15. **Jharkhand** state government has announced to follow a "Health Safety Week" beginning from April 22 to 29, to break the chain of growing COVID-19 infection rate in the State.
Note: People have been advised to stay home and do not move without unnecessary work. Essential services and medical services continue to function and all identified offices of private sector, central and state government offices shall remain open.
16. **Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)** becomes the first party that has declared the name of the entity which made donations to it through electoral bonds.
Note: A declaration of a ₹1 crore donation was made in the party's 2019-20 contribution report. According to the contribution report of the ruling party in Jharkhand, the donation was made by aluminium and copper manufacturing company Hindalco.
17. Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme has been launched in **Andhra Pradesh** for that first tranche of Rs 672 crores released recently.
Note: This reimbursed the fees for 10.88 lakh students. So far, a total of Rs 4, 879 crores have been disbursed under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme. The main objective of the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme is to provide scholarships to all the students who are not able to pay their fees because of their financial burden. The scheme mainly focuses on students seeking higher education. It aims to provide fee reimbursement to more than 14 lakh students of the state.
18. **Punjab** state government reiterated its commitment to achieve the 'Har Ghar Jal' target by 2022.
Note: Punjab has 34.73 lakh rural household, out of which 25.88 lakh (74.5%) have tap water supply. In

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2021-22, the State plans to provide 8.87 lakh tap connections, thereby providing tap connection to every rural household. So far, 4-districts, 29 blocks, 5,715 panchayats and 6,003 villages in Punjab have been declared 'Har Ghar Jal', which means every rural household has access to water through the tap.

19. **Maharshtra** state gets India's first Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU).
Note: FSRU based LNG Terminals aim at providing the ability to enhance the pace of natural gas import capability in an environment-friendly and efficient manner". The port is the first deepwater, 24×7 operational private port in Maharashtra.
20. **Andhra Pradesh** state government has signed an MoU with Microsoft Corporation to offer skill development training to around 1.6 lakh students and unemployed youths across more than 300 colleges and skill development centres.
Note: This is the biggest and first of its kind initiative by a state government to cover all the graduates of the state. Microsoft will collaborate with the Higher Education department to provide scalable skilling experience which includes, access to the 40 courses and certifications on Microsoft's learning resource centre, Microsoft Learn.
The Coal India Limited (CIL) has signed its first solar power purchase agreement with Gujarat govt for the sale of 100 Mw solar power with a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for 25 years.
Note: CIL entered into a PPA and supply the 100 Mw power generated to GUVNL within 18 months with a capital investment of Rs 442 crore. The 100 MW project will be executed through a Solar EPC Contractor (engineering, procurement, and construction). CIL plans for 3,000 Mw of solar power generation by 2024 and it plans to invest nearly Rs13,500 crore in solar power projects through the company's internal resources, Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV), and bank loans.
21. **Haryana** state government has launched 'Covid Emergency Loan Scheme' for new and old entrepreneurs supplying medicines, oxygen and other medical facilities to Covid-19 patients.
Note: For this, the State Government has set up a fund of Rs 500 crore. Under the scheme, Haryana Government will help businessmen, presently working in the state, to increase their current production or to set up new units to meet various requirements to tackle Covid-19 pandemic.
22. **Haryana** state government has approved 'HARIHAR Scheme' under which a job will be provided to abandoned, surrendered children and turned 18-year-old while living in child-care institutions.
Note: The children abandoned when below 5 years of age and surrendered before turning one-year-old will be eligible for benefits of HARIHAR initiative of the Haryana government. Under the policy, eligible children will get benefits of education, employment, and financial support. The policy provides for free schooling, higher education, technical education, skill development and industrial training, apart from financial assistance up to the age of 25 years or marriage, whichever is earlier, and one-time interest-free loan for buying a house in Haryana.
23. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has established a 'Water Sports and Adventure Institute (WSAI)' in **Uttarakhand.**
Note: The institute was inaugurated by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat along with Union Minister of State for Sports Kiren Rijiju. The Mountaineering and Skiing Institute of ITBP at Auli, will independently run this institution.
24. **Maharashtra** state government announced to appoint oxygen nurses to curb wastage of oxygen at hospitals.
Note: The primary job of an oxygen nurse is to monitor the requirement of oxygen every 2-4 hours round the clock, its use among patients and to ensure minimum wastage. Instruction has been issued to all government medical colleges and hospitals to set up a dedicated team of nurses.

Important News – World

1. First ever World Immunisation & Logistics Summit 2021 held in **Abu Dhabi, UAE.**
Note: Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare of India virtually participated in a final panel discussion on 'Focus on Asia: Vaccine production and distribution across Asia'. Abu Dhabi launches The Hope Consortium launched by Department of Health ,Abu Dhabi for full global vaccine distribution.
2. Longi Green Energy Technology Co, the world's biggest solar energy company belong to **China** is entering in to the hydrogen market.
Note: China's Longi Green Energy Technology Co., the world's biggest solar company, is entering the hydrogen market. This is mainly because hydrogen is a carbon-free fuel that can be produced by electrolysis of water and then stored and transported and used in every possible

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machinery such as cars to electrical generators to steel mills. The firm, which manufactures wafers, cells and panels, is the world's largest solar company by market capitalization, at about $52 billion.

3. **India** becomes the first country in the world to adopt Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP), an advanced disease surveillance system.
   Note: Expressing his enthusiasm at the brave, futuristic and pertinent amalgamation of healthcare and technology. India is the first country in the world to adopt such an advanced disease surveillance system. He pointed out that the new version of IHIP will house the data entry and management for India's disease surveillance program.
4. Vjosa Osmani has been elected as the new president of **Kosovo.**
   Note: While 82 deputies participated in the vote in the 120-member parliament, 11 votes were declared invalid. The 38-year-old politician studied law at the University of Pristina in Kosovo and earned a doctorate from Pittsburgh University in the US.
5. India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Japan** in areas of atmospheric science and technology that was approved by the Union Cabinet.
   Note: The pact was signed between National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL) and Department of Space and Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere (RISH), Kyoto University for academic and research cooperation and exchange in November 2020. The agreement would lead to mutual utilisation of facilities such as the Middle and Upper atmosphere (MU) radar in Shigaraki, Japan, the Equatorial Atmosphere Radar (EAR) in Kototabang, Indonesia and complementary instruments available from RISH, and the Mesosphere-Stratosphere-Troposphere (MST) radar and complementary instruments available at NARL.
6. First meeting of joint working group on 'Counter Terrorism, Countering Violent Extremism and De-Radicalisation' between India and **Maldives** held recently in April, 2021.
   Note: India and Maldives decided to enhance capacity building mechanism to counter terror as well as collaboration to counter violent extremism and de-radicalisation. The two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation that will include assistance and capacity building for the security and law enforcement agencies and other relevant agencies of the Maldives as well as collaboration and the exchange of best practices in the areas of counter-terrorism, preventing and countering of violent extremism and de-radicalisation, according to an official statement issued after the first meeting of India-Maldives Joint Working Group on 'Counter Terrorism, Countering Violent Extremism and De-Radicalisation'.
7. Prime Minister Narendra Modi holds a Virtual Summit with Mark Rutte, the prime minister of **The Netherlands.**
   Note: During the meeting both the countries are agreed to work together for the supply chain in the Indo-pacific region. India and the Netherlands share cordial and friendly relations underpinned by shared values of democracy, rule of law, and freedom. Both countries have wide-ranging cooperation including water management, agriculture and food processing, healthcare, smart cities, etc.
8. **Singapore** hosted the BASIC Ministerial meeting on Climate change _____.
   Note: At a time when the European Union is toying with the idea of 'carbon border tax' as part of its green push, the BASIC nations — Brazil, South Africa, India and China — have jointly opposed the move, saying such trade barrier would not only be discriminatory but also against the principles of equity under the Paris Agreement on climate change. The BASIC nations expressed concerns over the issue while discussing climate actions during the two-day ministerial meeting.
9. **Singapore** becomes the first country to ratify the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, the world's largest free trade agreement, led by China.
   Note: In doing so, Singapore became the first among 15 participating countries to ratify RCEP. The RCEP must first be ratified by at least six ASEAN and three non-ASEAN member states to come into effect. Once implemented, RCEP would be the world's largest free trade agreement, covering around one-third of the world's population and about 30% of the world's economy.
10. **Noura al-Matroushi** becomes the United Arab Emirates's first female astronaut.
    Note: The United Arab Emirates named the next two astronauts in its space programme on 10th April, including the country's first female astronaut. Noura al-Matroushi is the UAE's first female astronaut. The announcement gave no biographical information about her or her male counterpart, Mohammed al-Mulla.
11. Indian origin business tycoon of UAE, **Yusuffali MA** has been honoured with Abu Dhabi's top civilian award for their noble and charitable contributions to the community.
    Note: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has honoured Indian-origin businessman Yusuffali MA and 11 other individuals with Abu Dhabi's top civilian award for their noble and

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charitable contributions to the community. The prestigious award was given to Mr Yusuffali, who was born in Kerala, for his outstanding contribution to Abu Dhabi's business, industry and support to various philanthropic initiatives.

12. **Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan** have launched the construction of an international center for trade and economic cooperation named 'Central Asia'.
Note: Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov and his Kazkazh counterpart Askar Mamim, laid a capsule at the construction site of the logistic centre, which is located in the vicinity of the border check post Gisht Kuprik. According to a News release on Kazakh Prime Minister's official website, the center, which occupies 400 hectares of land, will have a capacity of accommodating 35,000 people and 5,000 trucks per day in both directions.
13. India contributed **$500,000** additional amount to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism, taking the country's donation to the UN office set up to combat terrorism to over $1 million.
Note: With this amount, India's total contribution to it so far is $1.05 million. India said it was keen to continue working with the UN office to further the common objective of combatting terrorism.
14. **New Zealand** becomes the first in the world to introduce a bill that would require banks, insurers and asset managers to report the impacts of their funding on the effect of climate change.
Note: The bill, said to be the first of its kind in the world, would receive its first reading in the country's parliament this week. The island nation has been at the forefront of trying to cut down carbon emissions and has pledged to make its public sector carbon neutral by 2025. It will also force the financial firms to evaluate the companies they are lending in terms of environmental impacts.
15. The Economist Intelligence Unit released Inclusive Internet Index 2021 along with social media platform **Facebook.**
Note: India is set to reach one billion internet users by 2025. There were over 687.6 million internet users in India in 2020. The Facebook 'Inclusive Internet Index' looked at 120 countries, representing 98 per cent of global GDP and 96 per cent of global population.
16. Recently, Italy has launched its first ever mega food park project in India involving food processing facilities **_____ Italy.**
Note: The pilot project "The Mega Food Park" was launched, in virtual mode, with the signing of a Letter of Intent between the ICE Office in Mumbai and Fanidhar Mega Food Park, in Gujarat. The main aim of the project is to develop an interaction between agriculture and industry. Also, the project will focus on the research and development of efficient technologies in the sector.
17. The 1st ever United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 to be held in September 2021 in **New York, USA.**
Note: The Summit is a part of the Decade of Action (2020-30) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The summit will launch new actions for delivering progress on all 17 SDGs. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to participate in the event along with other global leaders. The summit is to strategize actions for positive change in Agri-food systems.
18. **Japan's** passport has been adjudged as the most powerful passport in the Henley Passport Index 2021**.**
Note: India stands at number 84 on the list, as the Indian citizens can visit Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival in over 58 places. Japanese passport holders have visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 167 more destinations than citizens of Afghanistan, who are at the bottom of the ranking as they can only visit 26 places without needing a visa in advance.

19. **Norway** ranked at first position in the World Press Freedom Index 2021, released by international non-profit and non-governmental organization "Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**.**
Note: In the report India has been classified among the world's most dangerous countries for journalists. India was at 142nd position in 2020 as well. India was ranked in the "bad" category, along with Brazil, Mexico and Russia. In south Asia, Nepal was placed 106, Sri Lanka 127, Myanmar 140, Pakistan 145 and Bangladesh at the 152nd spot. China was ranked 177, and the US 44.
20. **Eritrea** is at the bottom of the World Press Freedom Index 2021, released by international non-profit and non-governmental organization "Reporters Without Borders (RSF).
Note: In the report India has been classified among the world's most dangerous countries for journalists. India was at 142nd position in 2020 as well. India was ranked in the "bad" category, along with Brazil, Mexico and Russia. In south Asia, Nepal was placed 106, Sri Lanka 127, Myanmar 140, Pakistan 145 and Bangladesh at the 152nd spot. China was ranked 177, and the US 44.
21. According to 'Global Energy Review 2021' released by International Energy Agency (IEA), Global CO2 emissions expected to increase by 5 percent in 2021 as compared to 2020.
Note: It would be the Biggest annual rise in emissions since 2010.The major reason for increase in CO2 emissions is due to rise in Coal demands. Coal is set to

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grow by 4.5% in 2021.The report is IEA's annual update on latest trends in world energy and CO2 emissions.

22. **Sweden** ranked at first position in the Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) that tracks nations on the current performance of their energy systems across various aspects.
Note: The report has been prepared in collaboration with Accenture, also draws on insights from ETI. The top 10 countries in the index are Western and Northern European countries, with Sweden in the first place, followed by Norway and Denmark. "China (68) and India (87), which collectively account for a third of global energy demand, have both made strong improvements over the past decade, despite coal continuing to play a significant role in their energy mix.
23. **Tbilisi, Georgia** has been selected as the World Book Capital for 2021 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).
Note: As per UNESCO, the city of Tbilisi in Georgia was selected as the World Book Capital for 2021. World Book Day is celebrated by UNESCO on April 23, every year. As a celebration of this year's World's Book and Copyright Day 2021, UNESCO has created a 'Bookface' challenge.
24. The 6th Global Forum on TB Vaccines will be convened in **Toulouse, France** from 22 – 24 February 2022.
Note: The 5th Global Forum on TB Vaccines was held virtually from 20th April to 22nd April 2021. It was attended by Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare **(MoHFW)**.The forum is convened by Stop TB Partnership Working Group on New Vaccines in association with International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) & TuBerculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI).
25. The World Cities Cultural Forum (WCCF) 2021.
Note: It is a forum of 40 top cities of world including London, Tokyo and New York. The WCCF is an annual summit attended by the deputy mayors for culture and heads of culture from the member cities & it will be hosted by each member City annually. The theme of WCCF 2021 is "The Future of Culture".
26. Norway tops in the World Press Freedom Index 2021 released by international journalism not-for-profit body Reporters Without Borders **-- 5th time.**
Note: The index was topped by Norway for the 5th time in a row followed by Finland & Sweden. India with a score of 46.56 ranked at 142nd Rank. Also, in 2020 India was ranked at 142nd. India has been classified as a country with a 'bad' environment for Press Freedom, it shared the classification with Brazil, Mexico & Russia.
27. **University of Manchester, UK** finds top position in the 3rd edition of Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2021.
Note: At the global level, University of Manchester (UK), University of Sydney (Australia) & RMIT University (Australia) grabbed the top 3 places. Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Tamil Nadu became the only Indian University to make it to the list of World's Top 100 Educational Institutions for sustainability. It was ranked 81st (overall ranking) in the 3rd edition of Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2021.
28. India is not a member country of 'Net Zero Producers Forum' being set up to support implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change.
Note: Saudi Arabia decided to join the forum. Saudi Arabia is the world's biggest crude exporter. SA aims to reduce its carbon emissions by generating 50% of the country's energy from renewables by 2030. U.S President Joe Biden unveiled plans to cut emissions by 50%-52% from 2005 levels at the start of a two-day climate summit kicked off on Earth Day and attended virtually by leaders of 40 countries including big emitters China, India and Russia.
29. **United Kingdom** will build World's most powerful weather, climate-change forecasting supercomputer.
Note: Likely to be operational in 2022, the supercomputer will provide accurate warnings on severe weather and help protect from impact of increasingly extreme storms, floods and snow in the UK. In February 2020, the UK government had announced funding of £1.2 billion (about ₹12,400 crore) to develop this supercomputer, which is expected to be one of the top 25 supercomputers in the world.
30. **UNICEF** has released the report, "Gender Bias & Inclusion in Advertising in India" that analyzed Indian Women's position in Televisions & Advertisements.
Note: The research conducted by UNICEF with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media measures the level and type of gender stereotyping found in Indian advertisements on TV and YouTube, through analysis of over 1,000 most viewed advertisements in 2019. The ads were provided and translated by the India Chapter of the International Advertising Association (IAA). UNICEF shared that IAA will be working with members to launch campaigns to deconstruct harmful stereotypes.
31. **Finland** country has topped the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI), which classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes.
Note: The index focuses on seven pillars: leadership and foresight; robust laws and policies; strong institutions; financial stewardship; attractive marketplace; global influence and reputation; and helping people rise. India has been ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government

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Index (CGGI), which classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes.

32. **China** has launched NEO-01, robot prototype capable of catching space debris with net.
Note: The NEO-01, which will also peer into deep space to observe small celestial bodies, was launched on the government's Long March 6 rocket along with a handful of satellites, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The 30kg robot developed by Shenzhen-based Origin Space will pave the way for future technologies capable of mining on asteroids, according to the company.
33. Along with India and Australia, **Japan** has launched the 'Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)' to build a resilient supply chain with focus on free, transparent trade & investment environment in the Indo-Pacific region.
Note: It will reduce the dependency of the 3 countries on China and counter its dominance on Trade. During the initial stages, SCRI will focus on sharing best practices on supply chain resilience & holding investment promotion events for stakeholders to diversify their supply chains.
34. **United Kingdom** became the first country in the world to permit self-driving cars on motorways.
Note: In order to make safe use of the self-driving vehicle system, the transport ministry of the UK was working on specific wording to update its country's highway code. For keeping the cars within a lane, a technology called Automated Lane Keeping Systems (ALKS) will be used as it uses sensors and software to guide the self-driving cars to accelerate and brake without manual input.

Honor & Awards

1. **Dr. Sharankumar Limbale** has been selected for the Saraswati Samman 2020 by the KK Birla Foundation.
Note: The Saraswati Samman 2020 marks the 30th Saraswati Samman. The book – Sanatan, features the story of socio-cultural struggles of the untouchables. The Saraswati Samman is an annual award instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991. It is one of the highest literary awards in India.
2. **Rajinikanth** will be conferred with the he prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2019.
Note: India's highest honour in cinema. Presented by: Directorate of Film Festivals. It is named after Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, who is revered as the father of Indian cinema. It was instituted in 1969. The recipient receives a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion, a shawl and a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.
3. **Hamnet** novel has won the National Book Critics Circle prize for fiction.
Note: Maggie O'Farrell's Hamnet has been conferred with National Book Critics Circle prize for fiction. Hamnet: Well-timed story for the current pandemic, explores the impact of the boy's illness and death on his family. He was Shakespeare's only son.
4. **Biswabhusan Harichandan** has been conferred with the Kalinga Ratna Samman for the year 202.
Note: It was given by M. Venkaiah Naidu during 600th Birth Anniversary of Adikabi Sarala Das and 40th celebrations of Sarala Sahitya Sansad. The award carried a silver statue of Goddess Saraswati and a copper plaque. Sarala Das was an excellent literary genius of 15th century who is well known as Adi Kavi, who contributed to epic literary works in Odia.
5. **Alfred V. Aho** has won the 2020 Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) A.M. Turing Award, known informally as the "Nobel Prize of computing.
Note: Lawrence Gussman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science, Alfred V. Aho has won the 2020 Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) A.M. Turing Award, known informally as the "Nobel Prize of computing." Aho shares the award with his long-time collaborator Jeffrey David Ullman. Aho and Ullman began working together at Bell Labs in 1967 and their early efforts included developing efficient algorithms for analyzing and translating programming languages.
6. **Jeff Bezos** has topped Forbes' annual world's billionaires list 2021.
Note: Jeff Bezos has topped the Forbes' annual world's billionaires list 2021 for the fourth consecutive year. India's richest billionaire Mukesh Ambani ranked at 10th position with total net worth of $ 84.5 billion. Elon Musk stood second, followed by Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg
7. **Suman Chakraborty** has been selected for 2021 GD Birla Award for Scientific Research.
Note: Suman Chakraborty has been selected for 2021 GD Birla Award for Scientific Research. He is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, has been chosen for his outstanding contribution to engineering science and its applications in developing technologies for affordable healthcare
8. **Ashutosh Bhardwaj** has been awarded with the famous Devishankar Awasthi Award 2021.
Note: This honour has been given to him for his work 'Pitra-Vadh'. He was elected by the selection committee

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of Ashok Vajpayee, Nandkishore Acharya, and Rajendra Kumar.

9. **Great Khali** has been inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame Class of 2021.
   Note: The Great Khali went on to battle many of WWE's most legendary Superstars, including John Cena, Batista, Shawn Michaels and fellow 2021 Inductee Kane, whom he defeated to pick up his first win on The Grandest Stage of Them All, WrestleMania.
10. Dutee Chand, the Jakarta Asian Games silver-medalist in 100 and 200 metres, will receive Veerni Award instituted by **Chhattisgarh.**
    Note: The award, instituted by the Chhattisgarh state government, recognises contribution of Indian women in different fields, including sports. In 2019, the Odisha sprinter became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the World University Games held in Italy.
11. **Nomadland** has won the best picture at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) 2021**.**
    Note: The awards were given during a pandemic-curbed ceremony that recognized a diverse array of screen talent. "Nomadland" filmmaker Chloe Zhao became only the second woman, and the first woman of color, to win the BAFTA for best director, and star Frances McDormand was named best actress.
12. **Guneet Monga** will conferred with honour of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres), the second-highest civilian French honour.
    Note: This honour has earlier been given to Hollywood stars like Meryl Streep, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Bruce Willis. Revelling in her recent success with Umesh Bist's Pagglait starring Sanya Malhotra, this is another proud moment for Monga. The French Consulate has decided to offer the title Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres to Guneet Monga for her varied accomplishments going past geographical and demographical boundaries.
13. **Kane Williamson** has won the Sir Richard Hadlee medal 2021.
    Note: He had a great test season. He scored 251 against West Indies followed by a century on the boxing day. Williamson's staggering performance against Pakistan helped New Zealand book a place in the ICC World Test Championship final.
14. **Ben Stokes** has been named as Wisden's leading cricketer of the year for the second consecutive year.
    Note: Stokes, 29, is the first Englishman to win the award twice since its inception in 2004. He scored more Test runs than any other batsman in 2020, with 641 in seven matches, while also taking 19 wickets. Kent all-rounder Darren Stevens has become the oldest person since 1933 to be named as one of Wisden's five Cricketers of the Year.
15. **Beth Mooney** has been given the 2021 'Leading Woman Cricketer in the World' award by Wisden'.
    Note: Mooney was considered the overwhelming choice for the accolade after also being voted the player of the T20 World Cup in which she played such a huge part in Australia's triumph, with innings of 81 not out, 60, 28, and 78 not out in the final at the MCG against India.
16. **Alfred VainoAho & Jeffrey David Ullman** have been declared as the winner of 2020 ACM A.M. Turing Award also known as the Nobel Prize of Computing.
    Note: The award was presented to them for fundamental algorithms and theory on programming language implementation. The award is also referred to as the Nobel Prize of Computing. Alfred VainoAho is the Lawrence Gussman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science at Columbia University. Jeffrey David Ullman is the Stanford W. Ascherman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science at Stanford University.
17. **Uttar Pradesh** state has won the "E-Panchayat Puraskar 2021" ranking first under Category I.
    Note: The award recognises the efforts of UP in implementing the e-applications developed by the Centre and other applications developed by the State Government. Uttar Pradesh was followed by Assam and Chhattisgarh in 2nd rank and Odisha and Tamil Nadu in 3rd rank. The award was instituted by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj(MoPR) to promote the use of ICT in monitoring the works of gram panchayats.
18. **Krithi K Karanth** become the first Indian and Asian woman to be chosen for the 2021 'WILD Innovator Award' given by the 'WILD ELEMENTS Foundation.
    Note: This award given by the 'WILD ELEMENTS Foundation' brings together a coalition of innovators, advocates and partners to "disrupt the status quo and identify solutions to global sustainability and conservation.
19. Along with Jio Platform, **Byju's** have figured in Time Magazine's first-ever list of 100 Most Influential Companies **.**
    Note: It listed Jio Platforms under the Innovators category alongside Zoom, Adidas, TikTok, Ikea, Moderna and Netflix. Byju's was listed alongside Tesla, Huawei, Shopify, Airbnb and DiDi Chuxing in the Disruptors category.

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Sports News

1. **Uzbekistan** will host the 2023 men's boxing World Championships.
   Note: Tashkent is awarded the 2023 AIBA Men's boxing World Boxing Championships after the successful bid presentation by the Boxing Federation of Uzbekistan. 22nd edition of the competition will be the first time when Uzbekistan will be hosting it. Uzbekistan is one of the most active members of the International Boxing Association, we have rich boxing history.
2. **Nethra Kumanan** became the first Indian woman sailor to qualify for the Olympics after she was assured of a top-place finish in the laser radial event of the Asian Qualifiers in Oman.
   Note: The 23-year-old Kumanan has a 21-point advantage over her nearest rival, who also happens to be an Indian -- Ramya Saravanan -- in the Laser Radial Class event with one race to go. The Chennai-based Kumanan currently has 18 points while Saravanan has 39 on the penultimate day of competitions in Mussanah Open Championship, which is a joint Asian and African Olympic qualifying event.
3. FIFA has suspended the football governing body of Chad and **Pakistan.**
   Note: The suspension will be lifted once the relevant government decisions have been repealed. A group of football officials led by Ashfaq Hussain, which was elected by the Supreme Court in 2018 to run the PFF but was not recognised by FIFA, took over the headquarters recently and seized control from the FIFA Normalisation Committee headed by Haroon Malik.
4. **Seville** city will host the 22nd Laureus World Sports Awards in a virtual ceremony owing to the raging COVID-19 pandemic.
   Note: The awards show, featuring presentations and related news stories will be available to the world's media and broadcast extensively on Laureus social media platforms. The winners of Laureus World Sports Awards are selected by a jury comprising 69 members of the Laureus World Sports Academy.
5. **Max Verstappen** has won the Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021, in Imola, Italy.
   Note: This win is his first victory of the season. The race was the second round of the 2021 Formula One World Championship. The seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) finished second, following a crash and sustaining damage involving Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas. Lando Norris (McLaren – Great Britain) took third place.
6. 34th edition of the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships was held in **Kazakhstan.**
   Note: The event was the 34th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships. India won 14 medals to stand in the third spot on the medal table. The medals include 5 Gold, 3 Silver & 6 Bronze Medals. Iran and Kazakhstan topped the medal tally with 17 medals each.
7. **Vinesh Phogat** has won the gold medal in the 53 kg Women's freestyle event in 34th edition of the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships 2021.
   Note: The event was the 34th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships. India won 14 medals to stand in the third spot on the medal table. The medals include 5 Gold, 3 Silver & 6 Bronze Medals. Iran and Kazakhstan topped the medal tally with 17 medals each. Indian Gold medalist are:
   1. Ravi Kumar Dahiya – 57 kg Men's freestyle
   2. Vinesh Phogat – 53 kg Women's freestyle
   3. Anshu Malik – 57 kg Women's freestyle
   4. Sarita Mor – 59 kg Women's freestyle
   5. Divya Kakran – 72 kg Women's freestyle
8. Mirabai Chanu is associated with **Weightlifting** who set a new World Record recently.
   Note: The 26-year-old Indian won the bronze medal at the event. The gold medal went to Hou Zhihui of China who created a new world record in snatch. Asian Games, held once every 4yrs, is the 2nd largest multi-sport event after Olympics.
9. **Barcelona** has won Copa del Rey football tournament at Seville in Spain**.**
   Note: Barca earned the Spanish King's Cup trophy, scoring all their goals in the second half of the final at La Cartuja Stadium, Seville. French star Antoine Griezmann scored the opener with a left-footed shot in the near post in the 59th minute to give Barcelona the lead. Dutch midfielder Frenkie de Jong doubled the gap with a diving header in the 63rd minute.
10. **Stefanos Tsitsipas** has won the ATP Masters 1000 series tennis tournament.
    Note: The Greek star had lost his previous two finals at this level, with Rafael Nadal denying him in Toronto and Novak Djokovic beating him in Madrid. Rublev beat 11-time Monte Carlo champion Nadal in the quarter-finals. Rublev knocked out Roberto Bautista Agut, Rafael Nadal and Dan Evans en route to the final but could not find a way past Tsitsipas.
11. Sri Lankan Cricketer **Dilhara Lokuhettige** has been banned for 8 years from all forms of cricket for breaching

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the ICC Anti-Corruption code the International Cricket Council (ICC).
Note: The ban was backdated to 3rd April 2019 when he was provisionally suspended. He was the 4th former Sri Lanka player to be charged with corruption. He was also charged by the ICC on behalf of Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) for breaching 3 ECB anti corruption code for T10 league in 2017.

12. Arjun Kalyan held from **Tamil Nadu** who became India's 68th Chess Grand Master (GM) after winning against Dragan Kosic of Montenegro in the 5th round of the ongoing GM Round Robin "Rujna Zora-3" in Serbia.
Note: In order to qualify for the title of GM,a player must achieve 3 GrandMaster norms in events covering a minimum of 27 games and an ELO(Electric Light Orchestra) rating of at least 2500 at any point in their career. Arjun Kalyan already had 4 GM norms under his belt but his ELO was 2477.After playing a steady chess in the three closed round robin event he crossed the 2500 mark to become India's 68th GM.
13. **Priyanka Mohite** become the first Indian women to scale the Mount Annapurna 10th highest mountain peak in the world.
Note: Priyanka Mohite from Satara in western Maharashtra has scaled Mt Annapurna, the 10th highest mountain peak in the world, becoming the first Indian woman climber to achieve the feat. Priyanka has also climbed the world's highest peak Mount Everest (8,849 metres) in 2013, Mount Lhotse (8,516 metres) in 2018, Mount Makalu (8,485 metres) and also Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 metres) in 2016.
14. Indian boxer **Amit Panghal** has won a bronze medal at the Governor's Cup in St Petersburg, Russia.
Note: Amit, a world championship silver-medallist, lost 5-0 to the Uzbek, who is also the reigning Olympic champion. This was the Indian's second loss to Zoirov after the 2019 world championships. In that event, he had lost to Zoirov in the finals.
15. Football Club **Manchester City** has won the League Cup final in London.
Note: The final was played in front of 8,000 supporters, including 2,000 from each club - and it was a delight to hear noise inside Wembley's vast arena once more. City's victory equalled Liverpool's achievement in the early 1980s of winning the competition four years in a row, as well as matching the Reds' overall tally of eight triumphs, and manager Pep Guardiola said his players are motivated by such milestones.
16. According to the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) USA will host the World Table Tennis Championship 2021 for the first time.
Note: This is for the 1st time USA will host the World Table Tennis Championship. The decision was made at a meeting of the ITTF executive committee on April 11. It is to be noted that, 2020 World Table Tennis Championship in Busan, South Korea was cancelled due to covid-19 pandemic.
17. **Rafael Nadal** has won the 68th Edition of Barcelona Open.
Note: This is the 12th Barcelona Open Title for Rafael Nadal. The 2021 Barcelona Open (sponsored by Banc Sabadell) took place from April 17-25, 2021 at Real Club de Tenis Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain. Rafael Nadal won his 1st Barcelona Title in the year 2005. Barcelona Open is an annual tennis tournament for male professional players and is played on clay courts.
18. AIBA Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships 2021 was held in **Poland.**
Note: India topped the overall medals tally by winning 11 Medals (8 Gold, 3 Bronze) . The AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships is an biennial event, around 414 boxers from 52 countries participated in the 2021 edition.
19. Indian boxer **Sachin** is the only one from the Indian Men's Boxing Contingent to win a Gold Medal (56 Kg) at AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships.
Note: India topped the overall medals tally by winning 11 Medals (8 Gold, 3 Bronze) . The AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships is an biennial event, around 414 boxers from 52 countries participated in the 2021 edition. Indian Boxer Sachin who hails from Bhiwani, Haryana was the only one from the Indian Men's Boxing Contingent to win a Gold Medal (56 Kg) at the event.
20. **Arjun Kalyan** won the GM round robin Rujna Zora-3 2021 chess tournament which concluded in Serbia.
Note: The 18-year-old Kalyan is a B. Com. student at the SRM College (Vadapalani) in Chennai. He is coached by IM Saravanan and Ukrainian GM Aleksandr Goloshchapov.

Books and Authors

1. **Jeet Thayil** has authored book titled 'Names of the Women'.
Note: This book depicts extraordinary reimagining of the New Testament from the points of view of the women

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who became the disciples of Jesus Christ - and whose roles have been erased from the Gospels Jeet Thayil: Renowned author, best known for his book 'Narcopolis' which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2012 and won the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.

2. **Nitin Gokhale** has authored the book titled 'Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life'.
   Note: The book is published by Bloomsbury. It is an attempt to capture Parrikar's persona — the man, the politician and the patriot. Gokhale is a renowned author, media trainer and founder of a specialised defence related website BharatShakti.in. and StratNewsGlobal.com.
3. **Shailendra Kumar Joshi** has authored the book titled "Suparipalana" released by the Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu.
   Note: M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India released the book "Suparipalana" authored by Dr Shailendra Kumar Joshi(SK Joshi), the former Chief Secretary of Telangana. This is the Telugu translation of SK Joshi's book "Echo T Calling: Towards People Centric Governance". The book was translated by AnnavarapuBrahmaiah and published by Maruthi.
4. **Sanjaya Baru** has authored the book titled "India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution" _____.
   Note: The book discusses the socio-cultural changes that happened in India after the 2014 General Elections. The book analyses the regime of Prime Minister Narendra Modi & Bharatiya Janata Party, on how the party wins state elections in places where it had no footprint. He served as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's media advisor and chief spokesperson (PMO) between May 2004 and August 2008.
5. "Believe — What Life and Cricket Taught Me" is memoir of Indian cricketer **Suresh Raina.**
   Note: The Book is all about the Suresh Raina, it describes about his life, challenges he faced as a young cricketer. He hails from Uttar Pradesh. He is the first Indian batsman to hit a century in all three formats (Test, ODI, T20I) of international cricket.
6. **JK Rowling** has authored the children story book titled "The Christmas Pig".
   Note: The story is about a boy named Jack and his toy Dur Pig, who goes missing on Christmas Eve. "The Christmas Pig" is Rowling's first children's novel since Harry Potter. Rowling returned to writing with the release of "The Ickabog" last year during the pandemic.
7. **Peggy Mohan** has authored the book titled "Wanderers, Kings, Merchants: The Story of India through its Languages".
   Note: The book was published by Penguin Random House India. The book argues that all Indians are of Mixed origins, through the inclusive study of languages like the story of early Sanskrit, the rise of Urdu, language formation in the North east. The book connects linguistics and history to explore the migration impacts on communication language.
8. **Sutapa Basu** has authored the novel titled "The Cursed Inheritance" that contributes toward the importance of the conservation of heritage through the stories.
   Note: The book is published by Readomania Publishing. The book provides an overall view of the heritage of Kolkata through architecture, social customs, modes of transportation and food. Sutapa Basu is the director of Learning Solutions at Eupheus Learning
9. **Amitav Ghosh** has authored the book titled "The Living Mountain: A Fable for Our Times".
   Note: It will be Published by Harper Collins India. The Book is written in the Structure of a fable about Mahaparbat,the living mountain. It is a cautionary tale of how humans have systematically exploited nature leading to an environment collapse. The book will also be published simultaneously in Hindi and as an ebook and an audio book.

Science and Defence

1. The 11th Edition of the India-US Special Forces Exercise 'Vajra Prahar 2021' was conducted in **Himachal Pradesh.**
   Note: The main objective of the exercise is to enhance interoperability between the Special Forces of the two countries. Vajra Prahar is conducted alternatively between India & US to share best practices & experiences in areas like Joint Mission Planning & Operational Tactics.
2. Multinational Military Exercise titled 'SHANTIR OGROSHENA 2021' was held in **Bangladesh.**
   Note: It will be held from April 4 to 12, 2021. Theme: Robust Peace Keeping Operations. It is being held to commemorate birth centenary of Father of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman. Other participants: Bhutan, Sri Lankan and Bangladesh
3. DRDO's **Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur** has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships against missile attack.

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Note: Chaff is a passive expendable electronic countermeasure technology used worldwide to protect naval ships from enemy's radar and Radio Frequency (RF) missile seekers. Defence Laboratory Jodhpur, a DRDO laboratory, has indigenously developed three variants of this critical technology — Short Range Chaff Rocket, Medium Range Chaff Rocket and Long Range Chaff Rocket — meeting Indian Navy's qualitative requirements. The development of Advanced Chaff Technology by DRDO lab is another step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.

4. Para military force, **CRPF** celebrates Valour Day (Shaurya Diwas) on 9 April every year.
Note: It was on this day in 1965, a small contingent of CRPF created history by defeating an invading Pakistani army, several time larger, at the Sardar Post located in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat. The CRPF men eliminated 34 Pakistani soldiers and captured four alive. In the conflict, CRPF lost six personnel who had attained martyrdom.
5. Two-week "Balikatan" (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) military exercise is being conducted between **USA and Philippines.**
Note: Unlike previous exercises, however, this year's "Balikatan" (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) drills to test the readiness of their militaries to respond to threats such natural disasters and militant extremist attacks, will be scaled down. Only 1,700 troops -- 700 from the United States and 1,000 from the Philippines will participate, unlike previous exercises which involved as many as 7,600 soldiers.
6. **IIT Bombay** incubated startup NanoSniff Technologies has developed the world's first micro-sensor-based explosive trace detector (ETD).
Note: It will be marketed by IIT Delhi-incubated startup Vehant Technologies. A fully made-in-India product in terms of R&D and manufacturing, the indigenously developed ETD device can detect explosives in less than 10 seconds. It also identifies and categorizes explosives into different classes.
7. The Indian Space Research Organisation recently signed an agreement with **National Centre for Space Studies (CNES), France** for cooperation for the country's first human space mission Gaganyaan.
Note: Under this agreement, France will be contributing to India's Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme. The Gaganyaan orbital spacecraft project was kicked started in August 2018. It originally intended to send an astronaut from Indian soil to mark the 75th anniversary of the country's independence in 2022. Test flights will carry an instrumented humanoid robot. The capsule will orbit at an altitude of 400 kilometres for seven days before splashing down in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Ahmedabad.
8. The United States space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) awarded $2.89 billion contract to **SpaceX** for its Artemis programme.
Note: The total value of this contract is $2.89 billion. SpaceX will develop a spacecraft 'SpaceX Starship' to land next to two US astronauts, including a women astronaut at the lunar south pole region, by 2024. NASA also aims to bring the first person of colour to the moon's surface as part of the Artemis programme.
9. **NASA** is all set to launch four astronauts to the International Space Station on World Earth Day (April 22).
Note: NASA is to launch the mission along with SpaceX. It is the second crewed operational flight of Crew Dragon Spacecraft. The mission will transport four scientists to the International Space Station. The astronauts to travel to the International Space Station are from NASA, JAXA and ESA. JAXA is the Japanese Space Agency and ESA is European Space Agency.
10. Indian conducted Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar' with **Kyrgyzstan.**
Note: The two-week-long exercise focuses on high-altitude, mountains and counter-extremism. The exercise is being held between Special forces of India and Kyrgyzstan since 2011, to take forward the strategic partnership between India and the Kyrgyz Republic.
11. The Luna 25 is Lunar Mission of Russia set to be launched by October 2021.
Note: The Roscosmos is the State Space Corporation of Russia that is responsible for space flights, aerospace research and cosmonautics programmes. The Mission will carry a lander. The primary objective of Luna 25 is to prove landing technology. It is to carry thirty kilo grams of scientific instruments including a robotic arm and drilling hardware to collect soil samples.
12. The 1st Unit of the Indigenously built ALH (Advanced Light Helicopter) Mk-III Aircraft was commissioned into the Indian Navy.
Note: INAS 323 Squadron will comprise of 3 ALH Mk IIIs. It will be commanded by Commander Samik Nundy. The ALHs are designed and developed Indigenously by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The squadron will perform roles like Search and Rescue operations, Special Operations and Coastal Surveillance.

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13. Experimental Mars helicopter **Ingenuity** of the NASA that became the first helicopter to take powered, controlled flight on Mars.
    Note: Ingenuity is a mini 4 pound (1.8 kg) copter, which carried a bit of the wing fabric from the 1903 Wright flyer (Kitty Hawk), the first successful heavier than air powered aircraft. NASA has invested around **85 million USD** to build the ingenuity, a 19 inch(48 cm) tall copter with carbon fiber blades.
    The ingenuity was taken to mars along with the Perseverance rover and landed inside the Jezero crater.
    The ingenuity was taken to mars along with the Perseverance rover and landed inside the Jezero crater.
14. **IIT Kharagpur** has successfully commercialized its flagship healthcare product COVIRAP the novel diagnostic technology to zero on infectious diseases including COVID-19.
    Note: The product, developed by lead researchers Professor Suman Chakraborty, Dr Arindam Mondal and their research group, has been licensed for commercialisation to the Rapid Diagnostic Group of Companies, India and Bramerton Holdings LLC, USA.
15. Bilateral Naval Exercise titled as 'VARUNA-2021' was conducted between India and **France.**
    Note: The exercise will be conducted from 25th to 27th April 2021. INS Kolkata, INS Tarkash, INS Talwar and Chetak integral helicopters will participate in the exercise. It was initiated in 1983 as Indo-French naval cooperation plays a key role in the two countries' joint vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
16. The Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) collaborated with Start-up Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) of **IIT Kanpur** to mutually promote Technology based Startups.
    Note: The Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) collaborated with Start-up Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) of IIT-Kanpur to mutually promote Technology based Startups. Under this collaboration, SICCI-SIIC conducts a Launchpad Competition – "SICCI-SIIC INNOVATION LAUNCHPAD".
17. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), successfully test-fired the 5th generation Python-5 Air-to-Air Missile (AAM) from Tejas air craft.
    Note: This adds the Python-5 Air-to-Air Missile (AAM) in the air-to-air weapons package of India's indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas. The trials also aimed to validate the enhanced capability of the already integrated Derby Beyond Visual Range (BVR) AAM on Tejas.
18. Community service centre **Aditya L1** has been set up to bring all data on board India's first dedicated solar space mission to a single web-based interface.
    Note: It is a joint effort of Indian Space Research Organisation and Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences. It will allow every interested individual to perform scientific analysis of the data. It is slated to develop specific tools to assist guest observers and researchers to prepare observing proposals for Aditya-L1 observations.

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